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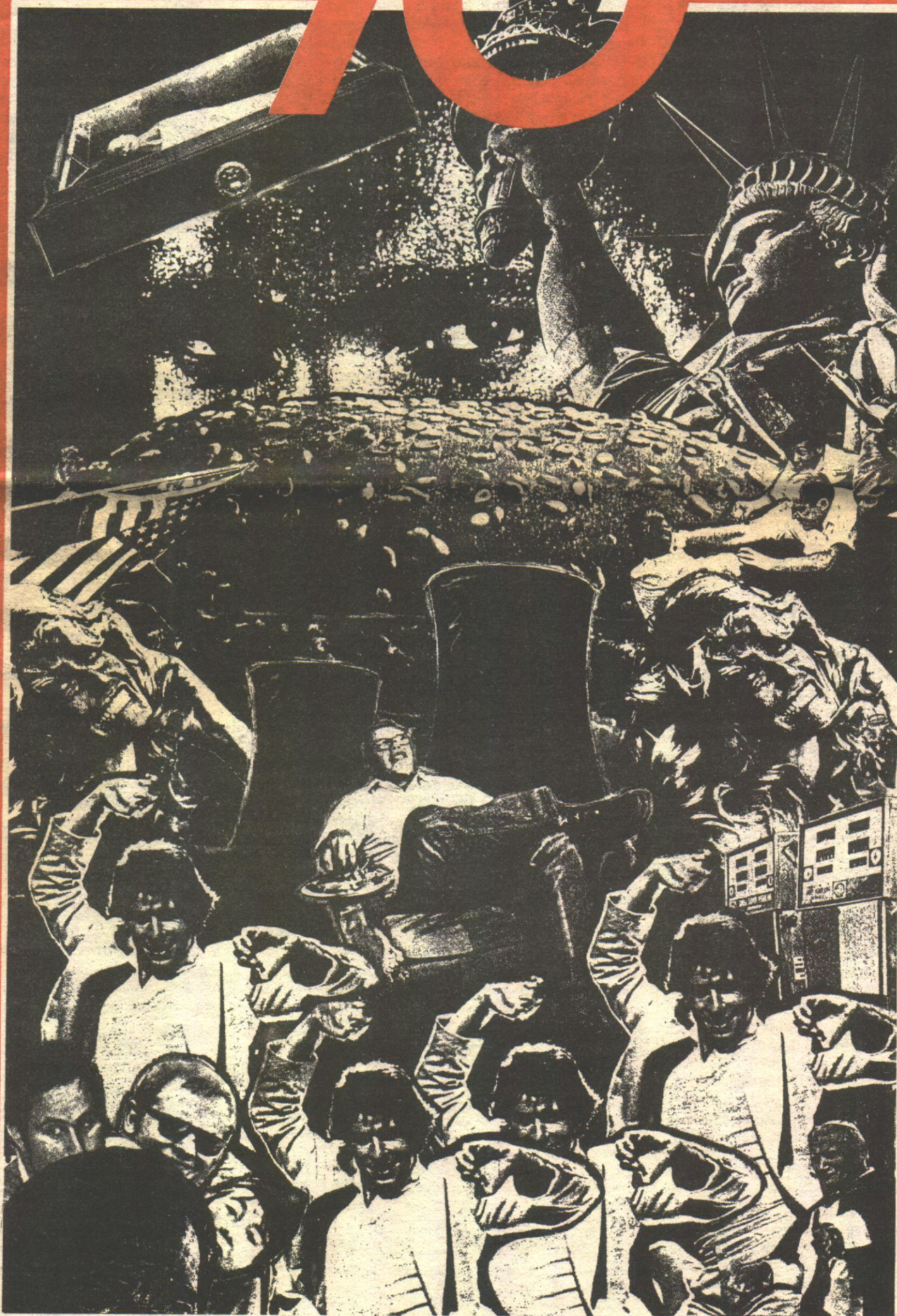
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THE 70'S



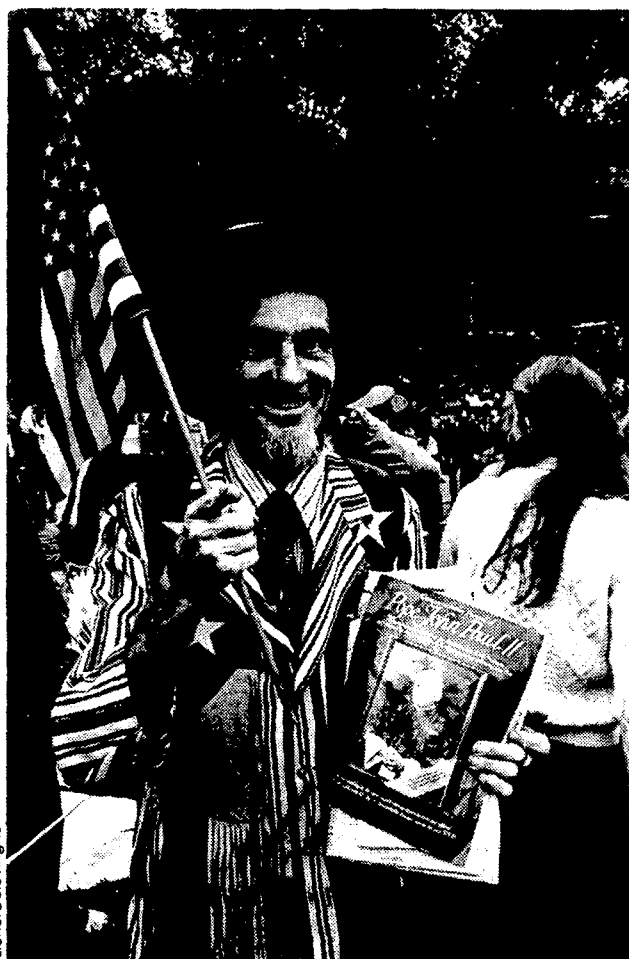
Tom Greenfelder

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS DECADE?

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THE INSIDE STORY

JOHN JUDIS



The right wins the Seventies

The '70s marked a transition from one era of politics and capitalism to another. If they have resembled any previous decade, it has been the 1880s or 1890s, inglorious decades that marked the transition from laissez-faire to corporate capitalism and from the U.S. as a continental to the U.S. as a global power. The "new left" was our populist movement; Jimmy Carter is our Grover Cleveland; Milton Friedman is our William Graham Sumner; and Edward Kennedy is our William Jennings Bryan.

In the 1970s, the U.S. finally relinquished its unquestioned world economic supremacy, which had been symbolized by the dollar's fixed relation to gold and by the willingness of other governments to hold millions of dollars in the expectation of exchanging them for American goods. With its Western European, Japanese, and Canadian allies, the U.S. entered a period of relative economic equality, which has brought in its wake heightened competition and collective stagnation.

In the '70s, the U.S. also lost its absolute military supremacy. Its defeat in Vietnam and the Soviet achievement of nuclear parity inspired anti-imperialist movements in Southeast Asia, the Mideast, southern Africa, and Central America. It also emboldened the countries that formed the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to defy Western demands for continued low oil prices.

Capitalist stagnation, marked by simultaneous inflation and unemployment, and the increased interdependence of the U.S. and other capitalist countries, marked by floating exchange rates and the synchronized recession of 1974-75, have severely limited domestic policy options. Policy-makers, who had relied on deficit spending to cut unemployment, are now under pressure from European bankers to hold down American imports and inflation by cutting spending.

To finance social improvements through government, the U.S. must either raise taxes, which angry taxpayers will not countenance, or institute government supervision of prices and investment, which business is not yet willing to discuss.

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Without recourse to promises of increased social spending, federal policy-makers have had difficulty bridging the political distance between business and labor, city-dwellers and suburbanites, the employed and unemployed, whites and minorities, and public and private workers.

In foreign affairs, policy-makers have not been able to break the hawk-dove stalemate of the late '60s. The doves have argued that an open-handed approach to Third World nationalist movement, regardless of their current ideology, and an emphasis on economic rather than military rivalry with the Soviet Union will eventuate in a universal American-led capitalism, along the lines Walt Rostow foresaw in his pre-Vietnam *Stages of Economic Growth*. The hawks have argued for regaining America's military superiority over the Soviet Union and our powers of intervention in the Third World. A succession of setbacks in the '70s (Angola, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and now Iran) seemed to confirm the hawks' fears, but in fact the debate is between pollyannas and paper tigers. Neither side offers a realistic post-Vietnam policy, given their common objective of a world that is dominated by American power. And the hawks' accession—with their plans for skyrocketing defense expenditures—will exacerbate American problems.

More broadly, the American military and economic defeats during the '70s have created an ideological crisis at home. Twentieth century American policy has been based on the promises of prosperity at home and superiority abroad. In the '70s it became evident that the U.S. could keep neither of these promises. As a result, many Americans felt the country "lacked direction." There was a "crisis of confidence." And for the first time since Plymouth Rock, Americans viewed the long-term future with alarm rather than blind optimism.

Rise of the right.

Different eras of capitalism each have their appropriate political coalitions. Such a coalition—based on the ideology called corporate liberalism and on government intervention in the free market—was first forged in the early 1900s and was updated in the 1930s and again after World War II. Corporate liberalism was a politics appropriate to a society that could promise increased prosperity at home—if necessary, through government spending—and a world made safe for American democracy and capital.

This liberal political coalition suffered setbacks in the '60s, but it was demolished in the '70s. Reflecting the dilemmas of the policy-makers, liberal politicians could no longer promise improvements for all, and they were divided about America's global role.

The political vacuum created by the collapse of liberalism, temporarily filled by anti-Watergate Democrats like Jimmy "I'll tell you no lies" Carter, is increasingly being filled by outright conservatives and right-wingers who promise business and the white middle class a return to America's global glory and the protection of their standard of living against the claims of urban indigents. Their programs of "supply-side economics" (raise federal revenues and create new jobs by reducing the tax burden on corporate investors) has the advantage of having been discredited before the majority of voters were born.

In the late '70s, these conservatives have set the terms of debate for both Republicans and Democrats. There is no better illustration of this than the paralysis and confusion of the Kennedy campaign. "We do not have to abandon demand-side economics to recognize the importance of supply-side economics in our modern life," Kennedy told the Investment Association of New York in an important campaign speech last September.

This resurgence of right-wing thinking is partly the result of the conservative impulses that recessions and

depressions awaken. The increasing appeal of balanced budgets and across-the-board tax cuts has emanated from the same source as the increasingly open and frenzied opposition to abortion, gay rights, and the equal rights amendment.

But it is also the result of the American left's failure to present an alternative to either liberalism or conservatism. The labor movement and the main minority organizations have been part of the liberal coalition. In the '60s, the left split over the war, and this ensured the defeat of Hubert Humphrey in 1968 and George McGovern in 1972. In the 1970s, as business, fearful of its profit rates, has taken an increasingly intransigent attitude toward its former allies in the labor movement, the left became, in effect, the last defender of corporate liberalism. The "new right" and the Business Roundtable were able to channel the diffuse dissatisfaction many citizens felt about society against "big labor" and the "regulatory lobby"—to scapegoat them for the failures of liberalism.

Finally, the resurgence of the right was the result of many Americans dropping out of politics. Lacking any sense of the country's direction and seeing no alternatives among the candidates, a rising number of Americans did not vote at all during the '70s or participate in any form of political action. Conservatives, who are concentrated in the politically-active upper income brackets, traditionally benefit from such voter disinterest.

A planned economy.

Supply-side economics and the "new right" have been appropriate to the confusion and uncertainty of a time of transition, but they are not appropriate—and do not mark—a new stage of capitalist economics and politics. The politics and economics of the '80s (probably the late '80s) will take their form from two relatively subterranean developments of the last decade.

•During the '70s, most corporate officials sought the easy way out of their troubles. They called for reducing wages, taxes, and regulations. But these measures will only encourage speculative uses of productive resources, misallocate needed resources and depress consumer demand. Businessmen will eventually have to consider some form of planning. Initially, planning will take the form of wage-price controls, but to ensure continued investment, it will have to go farther.

At the recent meeting of the Business Council in Sulphur Springs, Va., retiring Senator Adlai Stevenson made an impassioned plea for planning. "Some things must be done," Stevenson said, "even if by the government. If by inadvertence the government stimulates an aerospace industry that dominates world markets, imagine what it might by calculation."

•But continued recession alone will not convince the businessmen. The late '80s should also see the emergence of a new independent left. This left will be borne out of continued stagflation and the increasing antagonism between labor and business. Its seeds were tentatively planted in the '70s by the United Auto Workers' Progressive Alliance and the Machinists' Citizen/Labor Energy Alliance. It was foreshadowed in the brief, stormy history of the Kucinich administration in Cleveland, in Tom Hayden's surprising showing in the 1976 California Democratic Senate primary, and in the rise of the anti-nuclear movement.

As this left takes shape, it will have to vie with business in defining the shape of capitalist planning: to what extent it will be democratic, whether nuclear or solar energy will supply America's future needs. It will also have the opportunity to succeed where business and the right must fail—in breathing new life into the American dream of a free and democratic nation committed to a free and democratic world. ■

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IN THESE TIMES

An arms budget for Cold War II

Support for SALT linked to increased military spending

By Robert DeGrasse

JIMMY CARTER HAS UNVEILED highlights of a massive new five-year military program that will push the defense budget above \$200 billion by 1985. Speaking before the Business Council, Carter evoked Harry Truman's call over 30 years ago for expanded military readiness to protect the "free world" from "communist aggression."

That Cold War consensus for "national strength and international involvement," said Carter, while shaken by Vietnam, "survived that divisive and tragic war."

Carter justified his proposed 25.4 percent inflation corrected increase in military spending over the next five years by arguing that "The steady buildup by the Soviets, and their growing inclination to rely on military power to exploit turbulent situations, call for a calm, deliberate and sustained American response." Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee put it more directly: "We must decide now whether we intend to remain the strongest nation in the world, or we must accept now that we will let ourselves slip into inferiority, into a position of weakness in a harsh world where principles unsupported by power are victimized, and that we will become a nation with more of a past than a future. I reject that prospect, and I know you do as well."

Carter's proposal contained five major programs to reestablish U.S. military supremacy: 1) speedy development of the new generation of "counterforce" nuclear weapons;

2) upgrade U.S. forces in NATO and the Pacific;

3) a new "rapid deployment" force for intervention in Third World hot spots;

4) modernization of the navy; and
5) "maintain a force of highly trained military personnel."

This proposal, which represents an increase of almost \$20 billion in the 1981 military budget, sharply contrasts with Carter's campaign pledge to cut \$5- to \$7 billion from the military and his cancellations of the B-1 bomber and the neutron bomb.

Carter's unprecedented decision to release highlights of the military budget early was greeted with skepticism from both hawks and liberals. During Brown's testimony, Senator John Culver, D-Iowa, asked "what has changed in the nature of the threat to justify a five percent real growth target?" And Senator William Cohen, R-Maine, captured the source of the skepticism when he said: "I find it staggering that this presentation is unrelated to the SALT treaty."

Without such a proposed budget, SALT probably could not have survived the flap over Soviet troops in Cuba, former President Ford's qualified opposition, and delays caused by the crisis in Iran. Early release of military budget figures was a tremendous concession to pressure from Senator Sam Nunn, D-Ga., and Henry Kissinger, who had been actively lobbying Republican Senators to delay SALT until after the 1980 election.

Yet buying votes for SALT was not the central factor influencing Carter's decision. Within the White House, members of the SALT team questioned the President's decision to announce such a hostile policy less than two weeks before Christmas. Consideration of SALT had already been delayed until after the normally scheduled January budget announcement. And just five days after Carter's announcement, 19 uncommitted Senators, including Nunn, formally suggested that Carter delay



consideration of SALT until after the 1980 elections.

End of Vietnam syndrome?

Since pro-America demonstrations in the U.S. greeted the takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Iran, Zbigniew Brzezinski and other senior White House officials have been arguing that Americans have shaken their aversion to world leadership and military intervention. Stories aimed at documenting this change in public opinion appeared in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* less than two weeks prior to Carter's speech. Carter's recommended military increases reflect the success Brzezinski has had convincing Carter of the shift. As Secretary of Defense Brown testified, "we are in for a long pull of adversary relationships" with the Soviet Union and are confronted with "chaos in a large part of the world." Soviet participation in the coup in Afghanistan on December 28 just reinforced the expanding anti-Soviet sentiment in the White House.

Yet this new cold war policy, like Truman's in 1948, is based more on domestic political concerns than on real threats abroad. For the past three years Brzezinski has been searching for a way to convince Carter that the Soviets were challenging the U.S. for world supremacy. First he based this assertion on Soviet human rights policy, then on Soviet surrogate forces (Cuban) in Africa, and finally on Soviet troops in Cuba. Carter initially hoped to control Soviet behavior through detente and arms control and Soviet criticism of his manipulation of detente. Unfortunately, the Administration's early commitment to arms control provided a focus for hawkish opposition to post-Vietnam anti-militarism. The hawks successfully exploited a minor foreign policy change—the Panama Canal Treaty—to picture Carter as weak and stir up pro-military sentiment in the Senate. Growth of the organized right wing, Proposition 13 fever, and the defeat of liberal Senators Thomas McIntyre, D-N.H., Dick Clark, D-Iowa, Floyd Haskell, D-Colo., and Wendell Anderson, D-Minn., in the 1978 election quieted outspoken liberals in the Senate.

As the SALT debate heated up, hawks focused on defense spending. Carter chose to concede the debate by advocating higher spending and the MX missile. He hoped that by adopting a "two-track" policy of arms control and expanded military capabilities, he could sell SALT as part of a program for increased national security. Yet by conceding the debate over defense policy, Carter was

forced to argue for SALT on the assumptions established by the hawks. This pleased neither the hawks nor doves, weakening any base of support for the treaty. Senator George McGovern, D-S.D., said of Carter's "two-track" policy: "It sometimes appears that the deployment track is a four-lane highway while the arms control path is a dirt road." Indeed, Carter answered Soviet President Brezhnev's recent offer for restraint in European nuclear deployment by pressing NATO allies to adopt a modernization program basing over 500 new nuclear weapons in Europe.

During the last two years, in the face of intractable domestic problems, Carter has increasingly depended upon foreign policy "victories" like recognizing China and mediating the Egyptian-Israeli peace talks to build his image. In announcing his hard-line military policy during the midst of his sternest foreign policy test yet, Carter clearly signalled his intention

to reestablish the politically potent Cold War consensus.

To accomplish that Carter must build substantial support for this massive commitment of funds to the military. Arguing that "since 1955, federal non-defense spending has more than tripled, while defense spending today is still about what it was then," Secretary of Defense Brown asserted that "we must begin to give greater priority to defense." But this shift will either force Carter to further cut domestic programs—by as much as \$25 billion in 1982—or enlarge the budget deficit. This may prove more difficult than Carter thinks given last year's opposition in the House of Representatives to a three percent military increase. A broad coalition of labor and public interest groups worked with liberals on the House Budget Committee to prevent erosion of domestic programs and limit the growth of military spending. Led by Rep. David Obey, D-Wis., the coalition defeated the first budget resolution and eventually delayed the budget process for over a month. They compromised on the military budget primarily because of SALT, a consideration which should be resolved prior to this year's budget debate.

The most suspect of Carter's new proposals is the \$9 billion rapid deployment force. This program was defeated during the Vietnam War by Senate liberals who worried that it would turn the U.S. into the world's police force. Debate over this program will test how willing the American people really are to support renewed military intervention.

As former Senator William Fulbright observed: "What an irony, SALT has become the excuse for a tremendous increase in our defense budget. It's really depressing, considering all the other things we should do with the money." ■

As ITT went to press, President Carter, in a letter to Senate majority leader Robert Byrd, asked the Congress to postpone consideration of the SALT II treaty pending a full assessment of Soviet actions in Afghanistan.



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EDUCATION

The Boston Battle for campus rights

By Connie Paige

"DUMP THE STUMP"—referring to the congenitally deformed arm of Boston University president John Silber—is as irreverent a cry as any student body has taken up against its administration. But then Silber isn't just any university administrator. Recently he committed the unpardonable sin of beginning disciplinary proceedings that could result in the firing of five tenured professors. And that is only the most recent in a long series of authoritarian actions. For the BU students who for several years running have demanded his ouster, the chant is a virtual exorcism. And Silber now appears to some, students and faculty alike, as the ultimate academic anti-Christ.

Silber came to Boston almost nine years ago from the University of Texas, where he had established a reputation as something of a liberal. At BU, he soon proved himself otherwise. During the antiwar years, Silber made a practice of calling in the cops to quell student demonstrations. By 1976, he had squashed so many sensibilities that a significant number of his own trustees and faculty wanted him to leave. Silber survived the challenge by humiliating and ejecting most of his opponents and went on to break even more rules of academic manners and mores. When a campus newspaper criticized his administration, the paper was closed down. When an offending opinion was due to be aired on the university radio station, it was censored. Silber—or more often his hand-picked managers—made such an incursion into basic campus rights that the Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts (CLUM) recently came out with a report condemning the place. "The informa-

Silber's authoritarianism has affected many aspects of campus life. The university's labor record is so bad that BU has come to be known in some circles as the J.P. Stevens of academia. Its tactics have ranged from the dastardly to the truly bizarre. Several years ago, when workers in the student clinic attempted to meet together to air some grievances, the clinic director responded by building a plexiglass wall around two of the leaders of the insurgency to keep them from communicating with their fellow workers. The director later fired the two, after allegedly threatening the life of one in a conversation with another employee. The two sued, and BU settled with them out of court for the astonishing sum of almost \$50,000 apiece.

The clinic workers' campaign eventually matured into a broad-based drive to organize all the campus clerical employees, culminating in contract negotiations last spring. At the time, the university had just been through several rounds of complicated negotiations with the maintenance workers and then the faculty, who in a final effort to secure equity went out on strike. The three different unions were beginning to join together in some actions—the consummate threat to a place like BU. When the clerical workers finally decided themselves to walk out, at least a dozen faculty members refused to cross their picket lines, teaching their classes outside instead.

The retaliation was some time in coming, but Silber finally moved against five of the supportive professors this fall. Just to be sure nobody misunderstood why, the university trustees bought full-page ads in the local papers claiming the five had failed to report to work. Of the five, one, Fritz Ringer, has been a leader of the faculty union. Another, Howard Zinn, has been somewhere behind almost every progressive movement on campus. In a way, BU had chosen the

worst targets.

Silber had already revealed his ambivalence about academic freedom, but the assault on tenure came as a real surprise to the academic world. Of course, the trend has been in the making for some time. As the job market has tightened, all university administrations have gained a freer hand in hiring and firing. But Silber is taking away the last vestige of job security.

Howard Zinn feels the firing cuts even deeper. "This raises the interesting issue," he explains, "of what education is all about. In the '60s we saw education playing a part in a social struggle, an idea John Dewey had a long time ago. The issue is joined here. Now the president of BU is saying to students, 'When somebody else is on strike, you don't do a thing to help them.'"

Reaction to Silber's move has been swift and fierce. Six hundred faculty members at BU, Harvard, MIT and other institutions called for Silber's removal; Zinn claims he's getting letters and phone calls of support from as far away as Japan.

In addition to working through their union, the American Association of University Professors, the BU faculty is attempting to get publicity and support nationwide. "If we allowed this to go forward quietly through the normal, legal, polite processes," says Zinn, "the university's case would become almost plausible. We'd probably have a 50/50 chance of winning. The only way to make it a moral reality is to take it to a public constituency that understands rather than arbitrates and judges. Then we'll have a 95/5 chance."

UNIONS

New unity for miners

By David Molpus

DENVER

"IF WE DON'T COME OUT OF this convention united, you can kiss this union goodbye," United Mine Workers district vice-president Charles Fuller warned delegates as the UMW's national convention opened last month.

Sorely lacking in funds, its organizing efforts paralyzed by internal squabbling, its credibility with Congress, regulatory agencies and coal operators in shambles, the UMW membership was ready for strong leadership. Sam Church, who replaced the ailing Arnold Miller as UMW President Nov. 16, was anxious to prove it.

Church skillfully directed the delegates through a series of changes designed to shore up the union's power and his own authority. The delegates gave Church the extraordinary power to name his own vice president, to raise union dues by a whopping 120 percent and to abandon the "no contract, no work" credo of the UMW if selective strikes seem more appropriate.

The vice presidential issue was the first and perhaps most significant test for Church. The union's constitution calls for a special election but Church's forces argued that an election at this particular time would be too costly, financially and politically, for the union.

"We can't afford the luxury of fighting each other," said Lou Antal of Pittsburgh, who was a close ally of Jock Yablonski, the union reformer murdered on orders from then-UMW President Tony Boyle.

But delegate Clement Allen of Millsboro, Pa. said the price for unity was too high. "If you want to have harmony, if you're looking for togetherness, let's do it the democratic way," he said. "Jock Yablonski, his wife and daughter were murdered because he stood up and fought for democracy and you better not yield it."

On a voice vote the delegates gave Church what he wanted. Church said he would announce his choice for vice president at the end of the convention but later said it would take more time to make a decision.

The miners also showed their confidence in Church by voting to raise dues from \$12 to \$26.67 a month. Secretary-Treasurer Willard Esselstyn said that the additional revenue was needed to keep the union solvent. Ten years ago the UMW had \$44 million in the bank. Now it has less than two million, Esselstyn warned, and most of that would be wiped out by the cost of the convention.

Esselstyn blamed the union's poverty

on inflation, loans to local unions that they have been unable to repay, subsidies to striking miners and costly legal judgments against the union.

Willie Freeman, who works in Bluefield, West Virginia, where many mines are operating only two days a week, objected that such a huge dues increase means "miners will be eating roots and herbs while union officials get steaks, chops and cutlets."

But in the end a majority agreed with Joseph Phipps of Kazewell, Tenn., who said, "This union's in deep trouble. Every local in my jurisdiction is broke. We've got to look to the future and give the international the money it needs to run this organization."

Church promised that much of the new money would be spent on organizing, especially in the West. The coal boom there has largely bypassed the UMW and many observers believe if that trend isn't reversed the UMW will soon be merely a regional union.

When the convention opened the union faced a potentially crippling blow from coal producers. Consolidation Coal Company, the largest employer of UMW miners, announced last May that it would no longer participate in national contract negotiations through the Bituminous Coal Operators Association.

Church's counter strategy was to ask the convention for a special fund to finance selective strikes against companies that desert the BCOA. Working miners would be assessed \$25 a week so that striking miners could collect as much as \$250 a week. Even though this strategy breaks a 30-year tradition of no contract/no work union wide, the delegates shouted their approval.

In effect, the UMW is telling coal operators that it will fight to preserve the present bargaining structure, but that if they must play the game differently, the union is sophisticated enough to change its strategy.

This convention stands in stark contrast to the last one in 1976 when delegates fought tooth and nail on virtually every issue. Fist-fights erupted on the floor. Several executive board members refused to sit on the podium with President Arnold Miller.

Church, however, inspired cooperation and quickly won the delegates respect with his take-charge style. Delegates praised his political savvy and his ability to wheel and deal even-handedly with all factions. Some went so far as to lionize Church as another John L. Lewis. While that's certainly an over-statement at this point, it is clear that Church has guided the UMW past a crucial turning point. The anarchy that has plagued the union for most of this decade is coming to an end.

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EUROPE IN THE '70S

Portuguese defeat typifies left decline

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

THE EUROPEAN LEFT ENTERS the eighties groggy from its defeats. With economic prospects darkening, people are no more content with the existing society than at the beginning of the seventies. But hopes of change have faded as the parties of the left, largely absorbed in partisan rivalries, have been lacking in creative vision. The decade ends with the right in power almost everywhere, and virtually by default.

The last bad news of the decade comes from Portugal, the most dramatic stage for the European left's illusions and disillusion. In Dec. 2 elections, the right won a parliamentary majority for the first time since the April 1974 revolution that overthrew the decrepit fascist regime. Two weeks later, the right did even better in municipal elections, sweeping the Socialists out of power in the country's three biggest cities, Lisbon, Porto and Coimbra.

The big loser was the Socialist Party of Mario Soares, which had emerged as the most popular party in the first free elections held in April 1976 with 38 percent of the vote, only to drop to 33 percent in December 1976 and to 27 percent in the latest elections. Profiting from disillusion with the Socialists, Alvaro Cunhal's Moscow-aligned Communist Party, which previously had won about 15 percent, improved its score to 19 percent in the parliamentary elections and 21 percent in the municipals.

The results were even worse for the Socialist Party than the raw figures indicate, since the distribution of the vote tended to give power in middle class and bourgeois districts to the right and in working class districts to the PCP. As a mainly electoral party with a much weaker militant base than the PCP, the Socialist Party needs to hold office to maintain its influence. It held onto only 59 of the 155 municipalities it governed before.

Soares's compromise with the right helped it regain a respectability lost with the revolution, while his systematic anti-Communism helped build the PCP's image as the only principled party on the left. He thus contributed to the very Communist-right polarization he meant to prevent.

Even discounting Soares' many political mistakes, his strategy may have been doomed from the start. Sponsored by the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD), Soares set out to reassure western investors by isolating the PCP and undoing the most radical reforms of the revolution. The prospect of integrating poor backward Portugal into modern dynamic social democratic Europe certainly had broad appeal. But even as he succeeded, his support melted away. Once revolutionary fervor was quelled, the right fringe of his electorate was attracted to the refurbished right coalition, the Democratic Alliance, which has European connections of its own, notably in neighboring Spain and among the West German Christian Democrats. These connections were apparently more generous than Soares's friends in the SPD, judging by the lavish American-style campaign run by the Democratic Alliance. Another fringe of Soares's electorate, faced with austerity instead of prosperity, turned towards the PCP.

The success of the social democratic project depends on enough economic growth to finance social welfare improvements without hurting the interests of the privileged classes. The hard times of the seventies have dented social democracy throughout Europe. After the defeat of the Swedish Social Democrats and the British Labour Party, after the failure of the Eurosocialists in the European Parliamentary elections, the power-



German Social Democrat Willie Brandt (left) and French Socialist Party head Francois Mitterand (right) hoped to cut left parties a bigger piece of the cake.

ful SPD itself is now on the defensive as it goes into a tough election battle under the conservative slogan, "Security in the 1980s."

The Soares line undercut efforts to build a Socialist Party labor base in competition with the Communists. Like the French Communist Party, the PCP has dropped "the dictatorship of the proletariat" as the way to socialism in favor of parliamentary democracy. Cunhal's proclaimed goal now is to defend the constitution, designed to fit a democratic transition to socialism, from the gathering onslaught of the energized right. This is just enough of a softening to have persuaded Italian Communist Party leader Enrico Berlinguer to come to Lisbon for the PCP campaign opening last October, the first time that the PCI had given the PCP its Eurocommunist blessings. Not that the PCP has converted to Eurocommunism; Cunhal remains faithful to Moscow. But Berlinguer is seeking to promote as much unity as possible between all European left parties in the face of what he sees as looming confrontation with the growing forces of reaction. Against the right, the PCP can use labor struggles through its influence on the unions. It may fortify its worker bastions, and thus force even the most right-wing government to deal with it. But it is dismal for the Portuguese left that five years of upheaval have only strengthened this political dinosaur.

In fact, the right did not win a majority of votes in the December elections, but against the disunited left it was able to gain a parliamentary majority with 47 percent of the vote. But the unity of the right parties in the Democratic Alliance is also precarious. There are sharp differences between the parasitic bourgeoisie that supports the corporatist Democratic and Social Center party of Freitas do Amaral and the more modern business interests behind "Social Democrat" (not

recognized by the Socialist International) Francisco Sa Carneiro, not to mention the ecological monarchists of Ribeiro Teles. They are being pushed from behind by neo-fascist forces that hope to profit from the left's disarray to restore a reactionary regime.

Whatever its other divisions, the victorious right is united in a pro-NATO, Atlan-

tic-oriented foreign policy. Of all the missed opportunities of the Portuguese revolution, the failure to develop original new relations with Third World countries may be the most significant. The young officers who led the April 1974 revolution were directly inspired by the Third World liberation movements they had been sent to fight in Africa. But what with partisan quarreling on the left and Portugal's own economic weakness, the officers' strong Third World sympathies failed to materialize in mutually helpful bonds with the ex-colonies. East Timor was abandoned to the massacring armies of Indonesian imperialism. Hostile to Communist influence in Angola, Soares largely turned away from Africa to become a spokesman for the Socialist International in Latin America—a rhetorical role whose material counterpart, if forthcoming, would not be Portuguese but northern European, West German in particular.

The failure to develop an independent Third World policy is shared by the southern European left as a whole. Perhaps the main thing that did not happen in the seventies was the advent of a left in Latin Europe ready, for the sake of its own independence from East and West, to explore new kinds of North-South economic relations, starting with the Mediterranean area. Such a strategy might have been feasible had the Italian Communist Party's "historic compromise" succeeded in giving it a larger voice in Italian policy-making and had the Union of the Left come to power in France. More diversified, less exploitative exchanges between developed and undeveloped countries might give the Third World its only chance to lessen dependence on the socially disastrous development patterns imposed by transnational capitalism. In this sense, the political evolution of Europe is crucial to the Third World, since up to now liberation struggles, even if successful politically and militarily, end up being blocked economically by the absence of any alternative to trading on U.S. or on Soviet terms, both unsatisfactory, although for different reasons.

The Trilateral Commission was founded by David Rockefeller in 1973 in large part to forestall any such maverick deal-

Continued on page 12.

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ITALY

Kickback scandal threatens direct oil purchases

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS—AT LEAST THAT PART of the nation referred to as "the political class"—is not easily shocked. Scandals that would ruin political careers in other western countries are shrugged off in Paris as scarcely worth mentioning. Was the French president showered with diamonds by an African tyrant supported by France? German, Dutch, British and Italian journalists churn out excited stories, waiting for the government to totter under the impact of the scandalous accusations. But nothing really happens.

For one thing, the French readily assume that since virtually every politician in high office is probably guilty of some shenanigans, the only reason to bring such misdeeds into public view is to topple one leader in favor of another. The question that interests the political sophisticates is not whether the president took home a certain number of diamonds, but rather, who would profit from making a fuss about it. His right-wing rivals fear the left would profit, the left fears his right-wing rivals would profit, the Communists fear the Socialists would profit.

"We French are not moralistic and puritanical like you Anglo-Saxons," a top labor leader replied when asked to explain his indifference to the diamond



Left: Prime Minister Cossiga lights up from the AGIP trademark. Right: ENI chairman Claudio Mazzanti.

story. "This government should be defeated because of its record of unemployment, which is really serious, not because of personal scandals." Much of the French left considers scandal a diversion from real issues and a way of manipulating public opinion to serve obscure political designs.

The French cynics could, if they felt the need, point to Italy to justify their attitude. Italians never cease getting worked up over scandals. Their latest exercise in righteous indignation seems to have cost the country twelve million tons of Arabian oil, with no discernable improvement in public morality.



lieutenant, Claudio Signorile. Getting a Socialist in to head ENI fit with Craxi's strategy of moving towards a "center-left" coalition with the Christian Democrats. But Mazzanti allied with Signorile, and Craxi was furious at the idea that Saudi Arabian kickbacks might be bankrolling his main rival for PSI leadership.

According to the weekly *Espresso*, this idea was diligently planted by a group of disgruntled businessmen with connections in the Arab world who had wanted to serve as middlemen but had been turned down by Mazzanti in favor of other channels. Craxi repeated these rumors to Christian Democratic leaders, including the new prime minister, Francesco Cossiga. After the right-wing weekly *Mondo* brought the rumors into the open, the far left and especially the Radical Party deputies in Parliament began to clamor for an investigation. Questioned in Parliament, Christian Democratic government spokesmen answered so evasively as to raise more suspicions than ever. State Participation Minister Siro Lombardini, responsible for nationalized industries, said he had no proof nor even clues of any irregularities, but that the nature of the Saudi contract made it impossible for him to rule out corruption. Members of Parliament had no political choice but to keep demanding clarification or look like accomplices.

On Dec. 4, Prime Minister Cossiga ordered Lombardini to investigate the ENI contract and to suspend Mazzanti as ENI Chairman until the investigation was over. The next day came the bombshell. Saudi Arabia cut off oil deliveries to AGIP since "rumors and insinuations appearing in the Italian press and reproduced in the international press concerning our agreement...have taken on the dimensions of a huge scandal that has direct and indirect consequences on Petromin and Saudi Arabia..." With Islamic puritans capturing the great Mosque at Mecca to denounce the turpitude of Saudi princes, the latter are in no mood to star in one of Italy's long-playing bribe scandals.

Signorile said the Saudi reaction was no surprise. "That's an atypical market where it's the seller who chooses the consumer. Either you learn to play the game or you're out in the cold." He suggested sarcastically that Italy continue its search for "the guilty party" and if he's found, "let's burn him at the stake. That way we'll have something to keep up warm when our oil runs out."

Business and labor leaders viewed cancellation of the Saudi Arabian contract as a disaster for the Italian economy, which had managed recently to achieve a favorable balance of payments despite heavy dependence on oil imports. The Saudi deal covered only about five percent of Italy's projected annual oil import quota of 105 million tons, but it was considered an important first step towards other direct deals with Arab gulf producers. Italy already doesn't know where it will find 22 percent of its oil next year, and now the percentage is up to 27 percent. The bill could be whopping if Italy is forced to buy all that on the spot market. Signorile said he saw a "plot that leads to the free market, to spot prices in Rotterdam." In the past year, spot purchases have increased from less than five percent to nearly 20 percent of world transactions, to the greater profit of the private companies that play that market. Moreover, vexing the Saudis could be double costly to Italy, since Saudi Arabia is its best export customer outside the European Common Market and the U.S.

One labor leader complained that "this latest political operation in the name of morality has managed in one fell swoop to threaten the country's survival, wreck ENI's credibility and clear the way for the multinationals to reassert their supremacy."

Craxi seemed happy with the outcome of his crusade. But most of the left suspected that the Christian Democrats had skillfully used the Craxi-Signorile feud to get rid of Mazzanti and regain their control of ENI. *La Repubblica* reported a fresh rumor: that Cossiga agreed to oust Mazzanti in return for Craxi's crucial support in the vote on stationing Pershing and Cruise missiles in NATO countries.

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By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

PRINCE NORODOM SIHANOUK has moved from Pyongyang to Paris to organize his diplomatic offensive aimed at getting Vietnam to give him back Cambodia. Arriving in Paris from Peking on Nov. 25, the phoenix-like prince, who has had better luck than most of his compatriots in surviving the successive disasters visited on his unhappy country, stressed his long-standing friendship with France and his condemnation of his erstwhile allies the Khmer Rouge, still supported by China. France was obviously ready to give its diplomatic support to Sihanouk insofar as he succeeds in the next few months in gaining leadership of the fragmented Cambodian exile community and, above all, in convincing other governments that he represents a credible alternative to the Phnom Penh regime of Heng Samrin, brought to power by the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia last January.

Vietnam condemned the operation in strong terms. On the eve of Sihanouk's arrival in France, the Vietnamese Communist Party organ *Nhan Dan* published a lengthy article by national assembly president and official party historian Truong Chinh firmly rejecting any search for a "political solution" to the Cambodian problem that might jeopardize the Heng Samrin regime. Reviewing recent Indochinese history to show that Vietnam had been drawn into Cambodia in self-defense against Khmer Rouge attacks encouraged by China in line with China's traditional strategy of trying to encircle and weaken Vietnam, Truong Chinh called this year's political changes in Cambodia "irreversible."

Observers in Paris differed in their assessment of Sihanouk's chances. Some, like journalist Jean Lacouture, see a slim chance that Vietnam, faced with a hostile world and staggering economic problems of its own, may find hanging onto Cambodia too great a drain and be willing to accept some sort of a compromise with Sihanouk once it is clear that he is now independent of China. But others fear that the anti-Vietnamese campaign building up around the Sihanouk initiative will not only prolong the fighting in western Cambodia and drive the Vietnamese further into a stubborn and dangerous isolation—dangerous to themselves and to what remains of the Khmer nation.

While condemning Vietnamese military occupation of Cambodia, Sihanouk is quicker than others to recall that it was the Khmer Rouge who started the war with Vietnam. He has stressed that he is not anti-Vietnamese, and recognizes that no Cambodian resistance can hope to defeat the powerful Vietnamese military machine. But he called for the creation of a nationalist army to harass the Vietnamese.

In practice, Sihanouk's strategy seemed to depend on two weapons outside his control. The military weapon to harass the Vietnamese army is composed mainly, whether Sihanouk likes it or not, of the estimated 30,000 to 40,000 Khmer Rouge soldiers armed by China via Thailand—which provides them with temporary sanctuary—plus a rag-tag collection of private militias.

The other weapon is a propaganda offensive against Vietnam much more violent than Sihanouk's own statements so far. Three participants in a 90-minute French television panel discussion featuring Sihanouk two days after his arrival in France accused Vietnam of "genocide" in Cambodia, and brushed aside testimony to the contrary by the only two panel members who have spent much time in Cambodia recently—journalist Wilfred Burchett and French doctor Jean-Yves Follezu—by accusing them of being "Communists." The "genocide" charge was launched by right-wing French parliamentarian Alain Madelin who recently made a lightning visit to Phnom Penh and concluded rather hastily, but with evident ideological satisfaction, that the Vietnamese were helping themselves to food aid sent to Cam-

bodia. The charge was echoed by missionary Francois Ponchaud, who said that the "same sources" on which he based his earlier charges of Khmer Rouge genocide had informed him that "a more subtle and systematic genocide" is being carried out by the Vietnamese. This was too much for Jean Lacouture, who in the past has accepted Ponchaud's sources. Lacouture considers that the Khmer Rouge mass killing stemmed from a kind of madness caused by extreme isolation, comparable to the Jim Jones sect in Guyana. But the Vietnamese, he maintained, are nothing if not rational and would have no reason to wipe out the population—even a colony needs native labor.

Anti-Vietnamese sentiment.

What with rightists who will not forgive the Vietnamese for having defeated the West, and disillusioned leftists ready to believe the worst of their former idols, it is almost fashionable these days to accuse the Vietnamese of every imaginable crime. Vietnamese reluctance to let more than a few selected friends see the mess they are in lends credibility to the worst accusations against them.

In fact, except for such an obviously politically motivated visitor as Madelin, the Westerners—mostly doctors and relief workers—who have been in Vietnamese-occupied Cambodia concur in describing a hungry and traumatized population that greeted the Vietnamese as liberators. This sentiment may not last forever, but neither, apparently, has it lasted in Uganda, whose Tanzanian liberators have reportedly behaved somewhat badly without raising the indignation of the governments that hastily dropped Idi Amin but continue to support the Pol Pot government in the United Nations. The Vietnamese, like the Tanzanians, were provoked by their neighboring despot into overthrowing him, and are certainly justified in complaining at the double standard by which the world condemns them but hails Tanzania and even France for overthrowing Bokassa. The world's readiness to con-

Clockwise from the top: The new currency printed in China was never used in Cambodia; racks of skulls found outside a Cambodian prison camp; the women in this family were digging their own mass grave when their captors fled at the approach of Heng Samrin troops.

CAME

demn them only makes the Vietnamese less willing to allow the outside world to see Cambodian calamities for which they will probably be blamed, which in turn makes the outside world more suspicious of the Vietnamese, and incidentally obstructs any efforts to help the Cambodian people recover. It is hard to see an end to this vicious circle.

The historical view.

Some members of what might be called France's community of "concerned Asian scholars," who have closely followed Indochinese events for many years, stress the need to grasp the real historic reasons for the Vietnamese presence in Cambodia in order to avoid either of the opposing ideological explanations: (1) that they are there as angelic benefactors, or (2) that they went in as wicked imperialists.

According to these scholars, the invasion is not due to some irradicable racial hostility between Vietnamese and Khmers,

still less to Sino-Soviet rivalry, but primarily to the inner weakness of the Khmer Rouge regime itself which led it to become a base of Chinese-backed harassment of Vietnam.

The Cambodian Communist Party was always small and weak, numbering only a few hundred when Sihanouk was overthrown by Lon Nol in 1970 and growing to perhaps a couple of thousand by 1972. At that time the Party secretary Saloth Sar, who later took the name Pol Pot, was political commissar of the guerrilla army, which became the real instrument of Party rule. This Party could never have come to power in Cambodia by itself under normal circumstances. It was brought to power by the overthrow of Sihanouk, who allied with the Communists he had previously persecuted and driven into guerrilla resistance, even becoming their figurehead leader from his exile in Peking, by the American bombing that disrupted the countryside and radicalized the peasantry, and by



simplified ultra-Maoist ideology of the virtuous countryside surrounding the corrupt city (which had gained a special plausibility in Cambodia thanks to the Lon Nol regime and the U.S. bombing), forced the urban population out into the rice fields—a move that hundreds of thousands of people did not survive. While disastrous to city-dwellers and educated people, the regime in these early stages nevertheless apparently was largely accepted by the peasantry.

The change came after the death of Mao Tse-tung and the subsequent repudiation of the Cultural Revolution in China, which broke the equilibrium in the Cambodian Communist Party between its three factions. In 1977, Pol Pot began a purge of the ultra-Maoists. In a classic movement, the purge of the left was balanced by a purge of the right—that is, the surviving pro-Vietnamese cadre. In the Stalinist tradition, the purged were liquidated, and for that it was necessary to find a spy network to accuse them of belonging to. The ultra-Maoists were accused of spying for the CIA, and the pro-Vietnamese of spying for the KGB. On the assumption that anyone near a spy was a member of the network, not only the cadre but their colleagues and families were wiped out, with great brutality.

Cambodia had no excess of trained administrative personnel to start with. While the Khmer civilization has a great past, it had declined almost to the vanishing point a century ago, with population down to one million, when the French went in and kept it from being divided up between its Vietnamese and Thai neighbors. But for all the current nostalgia for French rule of Cambodia, France left the feudal Khmer royalty in place and never tried to educate the population or train a modern Cambodian elite. Instead, France brought in Vietnamese to administer Cambodia for them. That Vietnamese population was driven out and slaughtered in the wake of the 1970 Lon Nol coup.

After all these slaughters and purges, what did Pol Pot have left? Nothing but uneducated peasants, totally ignorant of the world, hastily indoctrinated in a few absolute truths that they were sent out to pound into everybody else. It was in 1977 that Pol Pot's new recruits began to treat the peasants as badly as the city people had been treated, and also to launch military attacks on Vietnamese villages. Whole villages were massacred, as the

Khmer Rouge entertained the grandiose delusion of expanding, both in Vietnam and eventually Thailand, to the vast limits of the ancient Khmer empire.

Were the Chinese motivated, as they say, by fear of Soviet expansion via Vietnam, or, as the Vietnamese say, by their own traditional ambition to dominate Southeast Asia, coupled with desire to cement their alliance with the United States? In any case, the Chinese never stopped backing the Khmer Rouge, even though they were certainly aware of the follies of their ally. Realizing that the Vietnamese would not put up with this sort of thing indefinitely, the Chinese apparently warned the Khmer Rouge to prepare for guerrilla warfare against a Vietnamese invasion. This would explain one of the oddities of Khmer Rouge Cambodia: how was it that a population that did nothing but grow rice from early morning till late at night was always hungry? Peasants say rice was loaded into trucks and carried off towards the west. Others say it was eventually buried in the ground. In medieval Cambodia, the rulers stocked rice in jars underground. The Khmer Rouge had no jars, so they just buried the rice in ditches in the forest where they retreated to fight on after the Vietnamese invasion.

Until last May, Pol Pot wanted to continue the war against Vietnam by conventional means. But when the rains came, he had to retreat into the forest, taking peasants with him. There is nothing to eat in the Cambodian forest, other than rice that may be stocked there. Thus after the Vietnamese attacks, the peasant population that accompanied the Khmer Rouge fled, starving, into Thailand. But the Khmer Rouge fighters that cross into Thailand look well fed and healthy.

The threat of famine.

Because of the war, the population shifts and the exhaustion of the people, the fields have been only partly cultivated. The rice that will be harvested in the next two months will provide food for only three or four months instead of a year. Some specialists predict that the real famine in Cambodia is due in 1980.

If so, it is certain that the Vietnamese will be widely condemned for "genocide."

The other day, French television showed a film of a Khmer peasant who had come to buy rice at the Thai border. A journalist asked why he was short of rice. The Khmer Serai (nationalist) guerrilla there translated his reply: "Because the Vietnamese steal it." But Cambodians watching the broadcast in Paris said the translation was wrong. The peasant had really said, "Because the rice crop isn't ripe yet."

The bitterness of the Vietnamese-Khmer Rouge conflict is not traditional racial hatred but an example of the contemporary quarrels between communist parties, one scholar insists. Such quarrels are particularly violent because verbal mediation and rationality break down when ideology is so similar and supposedly applicable to everything and yet national interests diverge.

The Vietnamese had to bring a locksmith from Ho Chi Minh City to open the locks in Phnom Penh. There was not a locksmith left in Cambodia. How many people have been killed? The figures offered (Hanoi is up to three million killed by the Khmer Rouge) are all guesswork, since the country is too disorganized for any accurate census. Fortunately, some of the most alarmist reports, such as that there are no children left under the age of five, turn out to be gross exaggerations. But the country is a shambles, and the survivors are hungry and exhausted by hardship. There is almost no one left with education, professional training or technical skills. If the Vietnamese did withdraw, is Cambodia in any shape to be independent?

"The Vietnamese will stay, not to commit genocide, but to keep the Chinese out, and to train a new Communist Party," one scholar predicts. "After all, that's what they do best," he adds wryly.

Cambodia's fate recalls the story of Solomon who awarded the disputed child to the mother who preferred to give up rather than divide the child with the sword. But there is no Solomon around and no claimant willing to give up.

the Vietnamese Army, which actually did the most decisive ground fighting.

The Party was not only weak, it was also divided. Some of its older cadre had been trained by the Vietnamese. Many of the younger recruits were ultra-Maoists, or followers of Lin Biao, emulators of the Red Guards of the Cultural Revolution with an extremely simplified, dogmatic and nationalist ideology. Pol Pot, converted to communism while studying in Paris in the fifties—during the Stalinist period of the French Communist Party—and won over to Maoism on a visit to China in 1968, actually represented something of a centrist position.

The year 1972 was crucial. The Sino-American rapprochement began, and the Vietnamese and Americans began negotiating seriously. Antagonism developed between the Vietnamese and their Cambodian allies. At this point, the Vietnamese in Cambodia were strong enough to have imposed their will on the Khmer Rouge, but they withdrew, and

advised their Cambodian allies to seek a negotiated settlement as they had done. The Cambodians felt left in the lurch, especially when, after the Paris accords, the U.S. turned its bombers loose on Cambodia from January to August 1973. The Khmer Rouge felt, with some justification, that the Vietnamese were ready to sacrifice the Cambodian struggle to their own interests. All this resulted in a radicalization of the Khmer Rouge. In some zones, where the Maoists were strongest, private property was abolished, forced population shifts began and pro-Sihanouk cadre were liquidated.

A divided party.

When Phnom Penh fell on April 17, 1975, the Party was still not unified but tried for a while to work out compromises. A sign of confusion is the fact that a new currency printed in China had already been transported to Cambodia by Vietnam but was never used. The Army, unsure of its control and with its



By Joanna Foley

NEW YORK

PRINCE NORODOM SIHANOUK arrives in Washington, D.C. in mid-January to start a month-long American visit. The former Cambodian head of state last visited the U.S. a year ago when he spoke in support of the Pol Pot regime at the United Nations.

This time Sihanouk will play a different role. He is seeking support for the establishment of a new Cambodian government—which he proposes to head. After calling for a "neutralist, nationalist government" for his country at a Khmer refugee conference in Washington, he will visit other refugees on the West Coast.

A quiet huddle with the U.S. government is an almost certain item on Sihanouk's agenda. No one will confirm that a meeting is planned, but in the last few months, the state department has made sympathetic comments about a neutral-

ist government for Cambodia.

There's some speculation that Sihanouk is seeking more than mere diplomatic support in this country. In a November interview in *Asia Week*, he said that 10,000 non-Communist troops which are already fighting in his country consider him their leader. He mentioned the possibility of secret military aid from major powers. "This fall Sihanouk spoke publicly of raising a liberation army," said Gary Porter, an author and journalist who was formerly associated with the IndoChina Resource Center. If this is the prince's intention, his coming visit to Khmer refugees on the West Coast may take on greater significance.

In September, Sihanouk moved to establish an organized political base. He invited Cambodian refugees from around the world to meet him in Pyongyang. There they formed a new organization called the Confederation of Nationalist Khmers and elected the prince as president.

In Tam, a former assistant prime minister is serving as Sihanouk's advance man in the U.S. "The Heng Samrin and Pol Pot regimes no longer represent the will of the Cambodian people," he told 150 people at a recent conference at Riverside Church in New York. "We want to establish an independent country with friendly relations with all our neighbors."

Liberal conference panelists such as author Frances Fitzgerald and journalist

Sihanouk seeks U.S. support

Sydney Schanberg supported the call for a new government for Cambodia but did not directly endorse Sihanouk as its leader. Fitzgerald suggested that the path to a new government should be paved by "a Geneva-type conference of major powers." She said that such a conference "should not take place within the U.N. context where the U.S. sides with the Pol Pot regime."

Even if such a conference does take place, it would not necessarily lead to a change of government or to Sihanouk's return. Several Southeast Asia experts told in *THESE TIMES* that the nations in the area might work out their own version of a neutral, nationalistic government for Cambodia. It might start with a broadening of the Heng Samrin government to include representatives of several Khmer political factions. Sihanoukists might join the government as well as representatives of the Lon Nol and Pol Pot factions.

As for Sihanouk himself, his ability to stage political comebacks has been demonstrated so often that it can't be discounted. Since he was crowned king in 1941, he has been monarch, prince, head of an independent state and figurehead leader under the Khmer Rouge. Can he recycle himself one more time? Given the major power competition in the area and the apparent U.S. desire to embarrass Vietnam, almost anything seems possible.

LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

LOST IN THE SMOKE

IN ALL THE FUSS OVER DAVE SULLIVAN's election to the Cambridge, Mass., City Council, and whether voters knew he is a DSOC member, Dave's vital role in the stunning 80 percent vote in favor of a national health service has been unfortunately obscured.

Sullivan's help, and that of his staff and supporters was indispensable in achieving those results to the non-binding ballot question, which read: "Should the Cambridge City Council support a national health service program which provides comprehensive care including preventive, curative and occupational health services; is community controlled, rationally organized, equitably financed, with no out-of-pocket charges; is universal in coverage and sensitive to the particular health needs of elderly, women, minorities and disabled persons."

Among the endorsers were congressman Dellums, Maggie Kuhn of the Gray Panthers, most of the candidates for the Cambridge City Council, and twenty organizations and agencies representing a broad range of constituencies and interests. Sullivan helped build this remarkable consensus for a national health service.

—Arthur Mazer
—Cambridge, Mass.

WHO'S LEFT?

AS I READ THROUGH THE INSULARITIES of left journalism, I am constantly impressed by the shrinking numbers entitled to consider themselves true progressives. I was eliminated with the Zionists (or any self-affirming Jews), but I would have been excommunicated anyway with the environmental "greenies," consumerists, humanistic psychologists and effete middle-class (although wage-working) poseurs, if not the gays and bisexuals, discophiles and joggers.

Few true leftists may miss me and mine but now I read that 45 million Christians have been dismissed from the dwindling ranks of my erstwhile comrades with not a recorded reference to the evangelical left. I don't know if your excerptees Mssrs. Rifkin and Howard know about *Sojourner* or *The Other Side* or the move of the United Church of Christ and others, but there are religious traditionalists who are political and social progressives.

Many of us come to democratic socialism from inspirations that long pre-date Marx and *ITT*. We progressives are not so abundant these days that we can afford to dismiss allies thoughtlessly.

—Bob Goldman
—New York City

ABORTION

UNLIKE CELESTINE WATSON (*ITT*, Nov. 10, 1979) I am not tired of the abortion issue. I just wish there were more persistent thinking about the ways abortion reflects and accommodates the injustices and brutalities of this society.

Let me explain by referring to a closely related problem. The Reproductive Rights Coalition in my state is organizing against sterilization abuse, for which they offer the following defi-

nition: "Sterilization abuse occurs when a woman is sterilized without giving informed consent. By informed, we mean that a woman truly understands the facts of the operation: its risks, side effects, as well as alternative methods of contraception. Also, she must have time to make a thoughtful decision. Sterilization abuse occurs if her case-worker threatens to cut off her welfare or other benefits unless she "agrees" to be sterilized. It occurs when a woman chooses sterilization because of poverty, lack of jobs or social services, housing or education."

Most *ITT* readers would agree that this is a useful definition of a coercive practice about which we are rightly indignant.

I think if you plug in the word abortion to replace the word "sterilization," you get a useful definition of "abortion abuse."

Both abortion and sterilization are being used to decimate the poor worldwide. Aren't we right to be indignant about this, too?

—Juli Loesch
—Erie, PA

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE WHEEL

THANK YOU ALAN SNITOW FOR "There's More Than One Way To Use a Satellite" (*ITT*, Dec. 12, 1979).

In the Southwest this year the Board of Directors of PBS CH 28 TV in Los Angeles appointed 26 people to a newly constituted Community Advisory Board (CAB). They are non-voting, their function is to advise the Board of Directors and were chosen by the Board. The CAB is heavy with academics but has only one trade union rep, Eleanor J. Moore of Bakery Local 37.

In November 1979 CH 28 had the first of three Open Forums where community leaders came to talk for three minutes each on public issues that should get attention from public television. These included housing, violence, nuclear energy, disabled, Hispanics, multi-cultural education, music, single parents, police review board, Indian affairs and trade unions.

The subjects that now get on compete for 30 minutes on "28 Tonight."

Tax-paying Southwesterners who want to see more subjects and greater depth in local problems should keep in close touch with CH 28. View, react, send cards. It will pay off.

Keep your finger in the dike.

—David Seldman
—Los Angeles, Calif.

CUBA, MAYBE

FOR SOME OF US WHO CONSIDERED Cuba their favorite Socialist country Fidel Castro's sweeping condemnation of Israel at the Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries in Havana last September was disheartening. Whatever objections one has against the Israeli government it is grossly dishonest to equate it with Nazi Germany's. It is even more regrettable that Fidel thought it necessary to add that "The heroic Palestinians are...living symbols of the most terrible crime of our era!"

So it is not Nazi Germany but the Jewish State of Israel that has committed the most terrible crime of our era! This is monstrous. Can Castro really believe what he is saying?

Does one still have to repeat today that the crux of the Hitler program of atrocities and murder in wartime Europe was the planned extermination of all the Jews in the Nazi occupied areas and it came close to succeeding? Why should this be obscured or denied now?

Castro charges Israel with the "genocide" of the Palestinian population. Perhaps he doesn't know that when Israel was established in 1948 it contained about 100,000 Palestinians. Today there are 300,000 Palestinian Arabs living in Israel.

Menachem Begin's government is despicable and I hope the Israeli people will soon oust it from power. But even this despicable government allows greater democratic rights to its political opposition than Communists enjoy in a good many of the non-aligned "anti-imperialist" countries represented at the Havana Conference. The Communists in Israel, including the Arab Communists, have elected representatives in the parliament (knesset), in city councils and trade unions; they operate an open press, run rallies against the government and win legal battles against it in the courts. The only elected Arab Communist mayor in the Middle East is the mayor of Mazareth in Israel. Yet all this is supposed to be "the most terrible crime of our era!" Why such exaggeration?

Time was when Castro termed the American imperialist war in Vietnam the most terrible crime of our era. Can any rational person believe that the Arab-Israel conflict claimed more victims and destruction than the U.S. war in Vietnam?

It turns one's stomach to read in the Havana newspaper *Granma* (Sept. 16, 1979) that the vice-president of Indonesia, Adam Malik, also denounced Israel at the Non-Aligned Conference. This is the spokesman of the regime that turned the Muslim fanatics and the army against the Communists and killed more than 300,000 of them in October 1965. This massacre was conveniently overlooked in Havana. One could list other regimes represented at Havana that have bloody records against their national minorities or progressives and Communists but who made up for their crimes with anti-Israel, "anti-imperialist" blabbering.

—Sid Resnick
—New Haven, CT

SUCKERS

I WAS APPALLED THAT A SEEMINGLY progressive paper such as yours would stoop to asking its readers to complete a so-called Readers Survey (*ITT*, Dec. 5, 1979). Any fool knows that those things are just sales gimmicks which will put you on some advertiser's sucker list. I object to such offensive and obscene material.

I use "obscene" in the legal sense of "tending to corrupt." The sight of the "Survey" has caused me to write this uncharacteristically bad-tempered, grouchy and unloving letter.

—Boris Mather
—Ottawa, Canada

Editor's note: Indeed! The survey was designed to provide us with information to get some suckers to advertise in *In These Times*. The response (over 600 returns, so far) has been most gratifying. We may even increase the amount of ads we can sell, and our shaky finances in the process.

POWER TO THE PIPIL

NANCY POWELL (*ITT*, DEC. 12) WRITES that "freedom of one's own body, time, and labor are all, not only for the heterosexual wimin, directly dependent on the availability and cheapness of abortion."

Could one conclude from this that the historical oppression of women, minorities, and wage-workers results from excessive breeding rather than from an undemocratic economic system?

Arguments against control of the abortion industry are no more appro-

priate to progressive politics than are the same arguments when used against regulation of the oil companies.

Let us not be duped into thinking we must blindly uphold abortion rights as if that were the only form of birth control for "wimin," or that it will somehow achieve social changes which, in reality, can only be gained by a comprehensive reorganization of the existing economic order.

—Helene Greenberg
—New York City

INTERNATIONAL LAW

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND MEDIA bring up the sanctity of international law regarding the hostages, but when you counterpoise the seizure of hostages with the overthrow of the Iranian government by our CIA in 1953, and the resulting persecution of the Iranian people, one wonders at what would be the final judgement in a fair international court of law. What gives the U.S. the right to commit direct and indirect mass murder with impunity?

The leftward minded people and opponents of war must be aroused to frustrate it. This requires great massive action, AND SOON.

—George A. Beyer
—Minneapolis, Minn.

DOING THE IRONING

WHILE I KNOW THAT THE (NOW OLD) 'New Left' is accused of and suspected of sexism by most of the (now older) feminists whom I know, and while I myself frequently chose to ignore the implications of these accusations, they were forcefully brought to my attention by the Guindon cartoon (*ITT*, Nov. 21, 1979).

Is there no other way for a cartoonist to illustrate the glut of synthetics, their hazards and the possible comic situations arising from their chemical composition than to show yet another woman ironing yet another man's shirt? And, by the way, all of those new fabrics are designed (read the ads) to eliminate ironing.

Oh, and one more thing. There are those of us who define as exploitive any depiction in which a woman is less clothed than the man or in a state of disarray—while the man is impeccably attired—in this case ready for the day and reading the paper, while his wife irons his shirt. A 1950's model couple. Come on! *In These Times* should begin to understand the times they are in—and the part that women play in them.

—Pat Orchard
—Philadelphia

Editor's Note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

CALENDAR

Marxism and the Metropolis—seminar offered on 4 Thursday evenings beginning Jan. 24, 8-9:30. Sponsored by DSOC, Washington DC local, 6th floor conference room, 1346 Connecticut Ave., just south of Dupont Circle. Nominal fee. For details, call 296-7693.

Long-time anti-war activist, **Igal Roedenko**, will be on a speaking tour of the Southeast February through May. Topics on which Igal speaks include: Gandhian Nonviolence, Strategies for the Anti-Nuclear Movement, Pacifism and Nonviolence, Peace in the Middle East, and The War Resisters League: 56 Years of Nonviolent Action. For information on how to arrange a visit by Igal to your community, write WRL, 604 W. Chapel Hill St., Durham N.C. 27701.

DIALOG

Has ITT overlooked the politics of abortion?

By Kate Ellis

THE ISSUE OF ITT'S RELATIONSHIP TO FEMINIST POLITICS and its feminist constituency has surfaced before, around praise for the Stones delivered by Bruce Dancis and more explosively around the "debate" between Elizabeth Moore (allegedly representing a left anti-abortion position) and Karen Mulhauser giving a competent, but not a left response. "I'm not going to rehash the issues surrounding this debate, except to mention that out of it came an ITT editorial staunchly supporting affordable abortions for all women, followed by a letter from its then associate editor to the women who had protested ITT's assumption to 'debate' the pros and cons of a woman's right to choose."

The latter asked for consultation to clarify differences that had emerged and, where possible, to overcome them. It then went on: "We'd like to have your cooperation in helping us plan better the paper's coverage and presentation of women's and socialist feminist concerns on an ongoing basis, including your continued input as writers or in helping us to get writers."

I was touched by this letter, thought it an exemplary way to respond to criticism, and ultimately began writing a column for ITT.

Then came the Oct. 30 issue with Ralph Fasanella on the cover and the promise of "Karen Mulhauser on abortion" on page two. I opened the paper and immediately encountered a deception: no Mulhauser on abortion but rather John Judis on Mulhauser telling us, with no comment, that Mulhauser came to Chicago for a benefit (for what, one would like to know) staged by the Playboy Foundation, that she "will be thirty-seven next week," and that the issue of abortion is "neither right nor left."

If it were Judis' regular practice on this page, "The Inside Story," to refrain from political commentary, one might at least find some consistency in this Time magazine style presentation of the positions of NARAL, the organization Mulhauser leads. Yet Judis does not hesitate to air his differences and raise political questions with other left groups and the paper as a whole gives serious consideration to differences among political tendencies here and abroad.

If I decided to write an article about some group or person in the labor movement, say, or the French left, I would assume I would have to fulfill certain bottom-line qualifications: Have I had first hand contact with the movement this person or group is a part of? Do I know its history, the context in which it functions? Do I read or speak its language? Were I to answer no to all of the above I would expect to be turned down for lack of sufficient guarantees of reliability.

ITT apparently does not have the same standards for writing about feminist politics. When I tried to find out why this Mulhauser piece had appeared following Abortion Rights Action Week, I was told that those events had been given no coverage because no one on the paper had heard of Abortion Rights Action week, a series of nationally coordinated events sponsored by some 44 organizations, one of which was not NARAL.

Judis attempts to cover this staggering lack of knowledge of the abortion movement by presenting Mulhauser's views without questions or comments. But it is not surprising that she did not spontaneously mention NARAL's refusal to be listed as a sponsoring organization

for the week's events on the grounds that "a socialist agenda" incompatible with NARAL's single issue approach underlay the principles of unity around which actions were planned.

There are two issues here, both of which came up in the aftermath of the Moore-Mulhauser debate. One is a disagreement that many of us had with ITT about whether NARAL is a left organization. According to Mulhauser (as told to John Judis) NARAL includes members of the New Right who objected when their newsletter attacked their politics. Have you ever heard of a left organization open to members of the right? Or, if one uses politics rather than membership to determine an organization's position of the political spectrum, then Mulhauser is right: abortion all alone is neither right nor left. Without a context we cannot make a political determination, which is why NARAL leaves it out.

We also tried to convey at the time of the Moore piece that one cannot write about feminism as if it were another country. Interviews, for instance, require just as much knowledge of background and context as other kinds of reporting. They stand or fall on the ability of the interviewer to ask searching, stimulating questions, which cannot be arrived at except through serious thought growing out of involvement with one's subject. Qualifications for writing about feminism must be required beyond membership in one sex or the other.

The paper needs to seek out correspondents who see differing and conflicting tendencies of the feminist movement as having an impact on their present and future lives. Judis says he did call a couple of us and none of us was home. Feminist readers of ITT: do not go out. You never can tell when you may be needed to answer a question like: where is the abortion movement these days anyway?

I wonder if others feel as strongly about this as I do. Our offered input has been, to some extent, taken up. Yet I feel that the basic situation has not changed much. I think we should let the editors know that we will not go on forever supporting a paper that presents, in a cavalier, Time magazine style, our deepest concerns.

John Judis replies:

I reject Kate Ellis's characterization of me and of NARAL's politics. But, first, let me take up her charges of journalistic incompetence and irresponsibility:

1) As a newspaper that speaks to and for a general left constituency, we consult with a large number of groups. We are eager to hear their suggestions and criticisms, and, when possible, to publish their ideas. The group Ellis refers to is one of these. As an independent paper, we do not, however, adorn any of these groups with the mantle of infallibility

nor do we take it upon ourselves to consult them every time we write a news article on a subject that may concern them. In my interview with Karen Mulhauser, I did consult with several knowledgeable people. I didn't believe that having failed to reach one of Ellis' colleagues, I should abandon any hope of an accurate portrayal of NARAL and the pro-choice movement.

2) I decided to interview Mulhauser because of my interest in their 1980 electoral strategy. I know something about the role the anti-abortion movement has played in states like Iowa and Massachusetts and Colorado, where it has attempted to defeat legislators who favor federal funding of or even the constitutional right to an abortion. I feel qualified to write about NARAL's role in combatting this movement. I would hardly equate my ignorance of the infighting Ellis refers to with a French journalist's ignorance of the French Socialist Party.

As for Ellis's political charges against NARAL:

1) NARAL is and is not a left-wing organization. It is not in the sense that the issue of abortion cuts across class and ideological lines. It is as much a moral or religious issue as a political issue. Quite a few active members of organizations and unions that generally align themselves with the left on economic issues do not favor abortion. (At the 1978 Democratic Midterm convention, there were several women who identified themselves as *feminists* opposed to abortion.) And as Mulhauser pointed out, many conservative Republicans, who might want to do away with unions and bomb the Soviet Union, favor the right to an abortion. Opposition to abortion is more common among working people than among the upper classes.

2) But NARAL falls within the left because its most active members are from the left, and its most active enemies identify themselves with the "new right." It has had to defend George McGovern and John Culver rather than Orrin Hatch or Jesse Helms. And in doing so it has allied itself with labor, feminist, and minority organizations.

3) To succeed in fighting for abortion rights, NARAL has had to walk the line

between being on the left, and being "non-ideological." At present, when the new right is attempting to polarize conservatives against abortion, it cannot afford to accept this polarization. Like any other organization committed to a cause, it must marshal all its supporters and influence. Along with other well-meaning leftists, Ellis wants to turn the entire pro-choice movement into a surrogate for a revolutionary feminist movement. She will only succeed at the expense of women's rights to abortion.

Karen Mulhauser replies:

Of course, NARAL supports, applauds and *benefits* from the special focus generated on "Abortion Rights Action Week" by groups across the country. The threat to abortion rights is serious and alarming.

But every week is "Abortion Rights Action Week" for NARAL. We are single-issue. At NARAL, the unifying principle is the politics of abortion, not the political philosophy of being "left" or "right." For voters who are alarmed at the erosion of access to safe, legal abortion, "left" and "right" have become labels that must not be used to the detriment of preserving a woman's right to choose.

But surely no feminist would say that restoring abortion rights to the nation's poor is inconsistent with the aims of the "left"—or that of electing strong, pro-choice legislators is inconsistent with the political goals of women whose concerns are not "single-issue."

The "right" is not a monolith. Many individuals on the "right" are pro-choice.

Cogent or impassioned arguments by feminists are not enough to stem the erosion of abortion rights by anti-choice activists whose single issue voices often are interpreted to represent many voters when in truth they represent a small minority. Therefore, NARAL has chosen to recruit, train and mobilize what has been a silent pro-choice majority in order to support pro-choice legislators and in order to give the lie to the political blackmail of anti-choice activists.

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IN DEPTH

Left is active but feckless at health care convention

By Patrick Lacefield

NOV. 4-8 THE WORLD'S LARGEST PUBLIC HEALTH CONVENTION assembled in New York City—an event two parts scholarly consultation, one part community organizing and political camp-meeting and one part farce. If proof were required that progressives and socialists have moved into professional fields and sunk their roots in community struggles, this convention of the American Public Health Association was it. The APHA, founded in 1872, is the nation's only professional organization representing health workers from across the spectrum—professors and nurses, physicians and health department workers—provides, in the words of APHA President John Romani, “a channel through which these professions can unify their interests in a single, strong, influential voice.”

That voice speaks for the 25,000 APHA from the left. The APHA has endorsed Rep. Ron Dellums' Health Service Act, a moratorium on nuclear energy production, ratification of SALT and a cut in the military budget. It strongly backs the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. “What we have here,” said one community health activist from Michigan, “is a liberal organization all can be comfortable with.”

The beginning of the 12,000 person APHA convention was anything but routine. As New York's Mayor Ed Koch, under fire for public health and hospital cutbacks and giveaways of public health facilities to the private sector, rose to welcome the delegates, several dozen demonstrators emerged with a banner reading “Racist Koch's Kuts Kill!” Suddenly three members of the Health Committee Against Racism, a Progressive Labor Party front, ran onto the stage, hit Koch with an egg and punched him in the face. Koch wrestled them to the floor as HEW Secretary Patricia Harris and Jean Young, wife of the former U.N. ambassador looked on in horror. Whatever disgust was present with the invitation of Koch to address the conference quickly turned against the demonstrators. “All those who would like to have these people removed stand up,” said Koch. Three-fourths of those assembled did. “What these people couldn't win at the ballot box, they won't get by force,” the Mayor continued, gesturing wildly with pieces of egg clinging to his collar. “This is not Iran.”

Jean Young followed Koch with a paean to the International Year of the

Child. HEW Secretary Harris then praised Koch as “a man of great courage.” “The health of the American people has never been better,” she declared. Evoking Harry Truman and Lyndon Johnson, she urged the association to abandon the Dellums' bill and throw its weight behind President Carter's phased-in national health insurance scheme.

But most APHA members weren't buying Harris' support of Carter. Eighteen fully-accredited sessions were sponsored by APHA's Socialist Caucus, 500 members strong and sporting apocryphal red and black “SCAPHA” buttons on their labels. Many of these sessions were co-sponsored with APHA's Black, Latino, Women's, Gay or Progressive Health Planners caucuses and all were swamped beyond capacity with hundreds of people at each, most of them non-socialists.

The '70s have been far from kind to public health facilities. Philadelphia General, the oldest hospital in the United States, closed two years ago. St. Louis's Homer G. Phillips has recently bitten the dust. Chicago's Cook County has received an 11th hour reprieve, but probably only at the cost of takeover by the University of Illinois. Detroit General is a \$70 million facility in search of a budget.

“We have here an interesting phenomenon,” remarked Dr. John Holloman, former chief of the New York City Health and Hospital Corporation and currently on the staff of the House Ways and Means health subcommittee. “Medically underserved areas are the first to lose their facilities and the fatal flaw is that we do not have reimbursement for those who most need care.”

Dr. Jack Geiger, a professor of community medicine and Socialist Caucus stalwart, argued that the crisis is essentially political. “What we're seeing is the destruction of competition by monopoly centers with the more or less active services of government and an ongoing public subsidy of a private sector,” he

explained. “Public hospitals are an ideological threat to the voluntaries because they put needs above profit and produce physicians tilted toward social concerns.” He pointed out that while total health expenditures are growing, the public share has dipped to less than 40 percent over the past three. “This is an abandonment of the poor and working class and the rhetorical word for that is murder,” Geiger stated. Geiger called for federalization of the 17-hospital New York municipal system as the first major experiment in a National Health Service, with federal dollars fueling a system based on need and subject to local control and democratic planning.

More than twenty sessions were sponsored by APHA's Occupational Health Caucus on topics ranging from International Perspectives (Cuba, China, Sweden, and the Third World) to Brown Lung Organizing to Racism and Occupational Health. “One of the most visible signs of increasing militancy,” observed Dr. Lorin Kerr, Director of Occupational Health for the United Mineworkers Union and past APHA president, “is the vastly increased interest in workplace health and safety issues.” Dr. Anthony Robbins, Director of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, echoed Kerr and called on health professionals to aid unions and government in taking the offensive against corporate interests that continually campaign to whittle away OSHA's authority. “The key notion is the workers' right to refuse hazardous work,” Robbins told 200 activists in a session on OSHA and NIOSH. “But first we have to raise the level of knowledge so they'll get to the point of refusing work. A recent survey showed that 74 percent of all bosses didn't know what workers were exposed to. In such as asbestos we should simply stop thinking in terms of standards. What we really need is a program to eliminate asbestos from the human environment.”

Defending hard-fought gains against New Right offensives was a theme in sessions on reproductive rights. The APHA came under fire from some feminists for allowing an anti-abortion exhibit and permitting an anti-abortion session sponsored by Public Health Workers for Life. “Two years ago Henry Hyde made an appearance at APHA and now—for the first time—there is an active caucus of right-to-lifers,” stated Dr. Joanne Lukomnik, a reproductive rights activist from New York. The APHA, on record since 1968 as supporting a woman's right to abortion, pleads democracy in giving the anti-abortion groups right to operate, a democracy that extended also to drug company exhibitors, armed forces recruiters and even to an exhibit for the Health Committee Against Racism, despite their attack on Koch. Lukomnik said that “a halt to abortion rights will not mean a return to previous fertility or social patterns but an increase in female sterilization.” She cited a reversal of sterilization procedures since 1971 when vasectomies accounted for 80 percent of all sterilizations. By 1978 fully 60 per-

cent were tubal ligations, though she did not explain that the major reason for the hike in procedures for tubal ligations was an increase in the safety level since 1971 and the fact such operations can now be delivered on an out-patient basis.

“If there ever was a time for us to become single-issue activists—1980 is it,” argued Karen Mulhauser, in urging APHA members to plunge into electoral activities for pro-choice candidates tagged for defeat by right-to-life forces in 1980. Sen. Robert Packwood (R-Ore.), the foremost target because of his leading role as a defender of reproductive rights, observed that the 1980 elections will make or break right-to-life. “If we can stop them this year,” he said, “the road ahead is all downhill. But if they score victories by knocking off pro-choice incumbents or are perceived to have had great influence, then Congress may be pressured into approving a constitutional amendment and throw the whole matter out to the states to decide.”

“The conservative right wing controls 25 percent of the house,” observed abortion rights activists Rhonda Copeland. “An amendment would pass in the House right now.”

The activities of the APHA Socialist Caucus demonstrated openness to a socialist perspective on health issues, but the Caucus did not have a clear one. In a pre-convention session on “Socialist Pedagogy and Teaching Workers Occupational Health,” caucus leaders and activists cooperating with local unions in COSH (Committee on Occupational Health and Safety) projects clashed over the degree to which they should “collaborate” with “union bureaucrats.” Few of the Caucus participants identify with any group, though there were a sprinkling of New American Movement, Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, and Communist Party-USA people. When Rick Kunnes, national secretary of NAM rose to criticize the Caucus' approach as excessively academic and explicitly anti-organizational, Caucus chair Evan Stark, a professor at Yale University, wrote off existing socialist organizations—especially NAM and DSOC—as “not good enough” and “worthless.” There was no discussion of the 1980 elections, or for that matter of any political action by the Caucus other than next year's APHA convention.

An emergency caucus of urban and rural health care activists formed a National Coalition for Public General Hospitals. The coalition, independent of the APHA, includes health activists from New York, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis and elsewhere. “We will be sending a delegation to meet with candidates Kennedy and Carter and establish a national network to coordinate efforts to defend public hospitals,” explained Jim Schlosser, an intern at endangered Cook County hospital in Chicago. Health activists involved in the formation of the coalition also pressed the APHA governing council to approve a resolution calling for the convening of a special national conference around the plight of public hospitals in the next six months.

Europe

Continued from page 5.

ings between North and South by politically holding together the northern developed countries of North America, Western Europe and Asia. On the whole, Trilateral policy has succeeded politically. The defeat of the southern European left is one of these successes. But the system has failed to solve its economic problems, and there are signs that the gentle, consultative methods of Trilateralism may give way to more brutal confrontations between nations and classes.

The U.S. financial managers typified by David Rockefeller were at least initially able to turn the 1973 oil price increases to their advantage. U.S. oil companies profited most, and the Arab oil revenues were either spent on Western technology or ended up in Western investment institutions, which hoped to use the huge capital accumulation to finance a new international economic cycle, tying coun-

tries more tightly to the world market by orienting their production to export. So far, this increased dependence has made most of the world poorer. There have been some successes in Asia, but on the whole, capitalist development of the Third World in the seventies has been a gigantic failure, of which the Iranian revolution is the most dramatic result. The new round of oil price increases, aside from further strapping the poorest countries and hurting the industrial economies, risks putting an impossible strain on the international banks; they have run out of safe profitable investments for all the capital available to them. How are they to keep paying interest on deposits? Inflation and the rush to buy gold are unsatisfactory remedies for the lack of good productive investment possibilities.

In short, the world capitalist system is in deep trouble. But at the same time, the left appears unable to propose credible alternatives. “The old world is dying, and the new refuses to be born,” seems to sum-up the situation on the eve of the 1980s.

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By Pat Aufderheide

In a lot of ways it's been a filthy decade for moviegoing. As James Monaco has pointed out in his excellent *American Film Now* (with his *How to Read a Film* perhaps the best movie books of the decade), it has been dominated by a commercial nostalgia.

We have also watched the cancerous growth of the blockbuster, the big-spender movie with gigantesque advertising budgets behind it. We've gotten so out of hand that *Variety* analysts are now sounding warning signals.

So by Christmas 1979 we got *1941*, a loud episodic comedy that exemplifies the twin phenomena of nostalgia and blockbuster. Made by young Steven "Jaws" Spielberg, *1941* refers frequently to other movies for its jokes, including a shameless reference to *Jaws*. The film also tries to echo *Animal House*'s slapstick and *American Graffiti*'s adolescent nostalgia. All it lacks, this sad android of a movie, is a soul of its own.

Further, this was an era in which old filmic gods (say, Ingmar Bergman) lifted up their clay feet and waved them in our faces, while new ones (say, Werner Herzog) solemnly informed us that clay feet were in the nature of godhead. And much-heralded beginnings (the Mel Brooks School of Comedy, the Andy Warhol Postmodern Fashion Center, the Robert Altman Nonverbal Philosophy Method) lost steam as they went along.

The faint hope of a female aesthetic in commercial features came and went. We said goodbye to John Wayne and his westerns with *The Shootist*. We endured a psychic battering with a burst of unpleasant supernatural horror movies, riding the 1973 Exorcist wave. By the end of the decade, instead of displacing social anxiety into religious guilt and horror, we're throwing our problems into space. (Who knows? The next *Star Trek* may equal the budget of a NASA moon shot, and then art will imitate life, returning NASA's compliment of imitating art by naming the NASA space shuttle "Enterprise.")

But for a decade that has had as much bad press as the '70s, and in a medium as quixotic and as prey to artistic nonsequitur as the movies, it is surprising that there were as many moments of movie enjoyment, of empathy and of wonder as there were.

The pleasures changed as the decade did, however. The best of the early part of the decade—say, to the end of 1974, to *Godfather II* and before *Jaws*—was often somber, sometimes angry, experimental, risking alternatives to the lowest-common denominator approach to programming. It ended a period of first and second works by assertive new filmmakers.

The best of the second part of the decade marked not only a consolidation but a change in tone. Broad humor, domestic comedy and efficient escapism triumphed reflecting the much-vaunted inward turn of the American conscience. The best of the later '70s was not necessarily less than the early part, but it demonstrated that the locus of anxiety for many people had moved back inside the home.

American commercial features (like those here considered, in theatrical release between 1970 and 1979) at their best tell engrossing stories that touch heart-felt, but often poorly articulated,

preoccupations. They are one of the few collective emotional experiences we willingly undertake in public. That's why narrative and character development are as important as every turn of the experimental wheel in special effects, and why it's important to pay attention to our popular films.

Here are the '70s films I most enjoyed and remembered, listed—in deference to tradition—in ten categories.

Tell me a story.

Among the movie-movies of the era, three were memorable for their compelling storytelling, for keeping you at the edge of your seat demanding, "And then what happened?" Starting out the decade was *Patton* (1970) which suffered from presidential favor. *The Man Who Would Be King* (1975) provided not only a rousing adventure story but a vivid portrait of English colonialism in India. And of course there was the buddies' buddy film, *The Sting* (1973), in which men will be boys and the whole movie will be a big joke on big money.

Thrill me.

Slipped in between an ever-starchier diet of star-studded films of international intrigue and star-studded living room dramas of airplanes in trouble, (and after the same escape-oriented dollar) were several excellent suspense films. Among the gumshoe movies, we discreetly pass by the Chandler remarks and note the superbly written (by Robert Towne) *Chinatown* (1974), which was ominous and decadent in an early '70s style but which kicked off the gumshoe revival. The later movie buff's heartwarmer, *The Late Show* (1977), was more concerned with nostalgic form than with social decadence.

Marking the turn in the decade was *Jaws* (1975), the efficiently

The Godfather I and II
Chinatown
Mean Streets
Patton
Annie Hall
McCabe and Mrs. Miller
Animal House
Bingo Long and the Travelling All Stars and Motor Kings
Rocky
Martin

10

escapist film about (I still insist) the ultimate *vagina dentata* and the male bonding that subdues it. Perhaps signalling a return to social concern (or a nostalgia for Capraesque liberalism) was *China Syndrome* (1979), firmly within an action-thriller tradition, yet up to the minute with its anti-corporate critique.

Scare me.

Besides the Devil-made-me-do-it screamers (an open flight on the part of packed audiences from the social to the supernatural), this decade also brought back vampires. The languidly sexy *Dracula* and dreamy *Nosferatu* (both 1979), however, suggested that sexual repression ain't what it used to be. Of the decade's horror films, the sparsely-distributed *Martin*, by George Romero, acknowledged changes in our expression of sexual tension (no less, but different than the Victorians). *Martin* was what *Nosferatu* should have been—a melancholy but bloodchilling comment on tradition in the vampire legend and in horror films, as well as a recounting of the dangers of old-fashioned passion.

Rising up angry.

Two films from the early part of the decade unforgettably transmitted an angry energy to movie audiences. Neither stopped to be polite or politically considered. *Sweet Sweetback's Badaass Song* (1971) had an urgent rhythm of sexual violence and social rage in its story of one black man's flight from The Man. There was also Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets* (1973), about being poor, Catholic, male, urban and sexually desperate. Nothing in the thoroughly nasty *Taxi Driver* (1976) was as powerful as *Mean Streets*' hero's hopeless quest for salvation through sacrifice.

In the later part of the decade films this culturally explicit about their rage became rare. Even *The Warriors* was a zombie of a movie, all form, a ballet of gang warfare.

Kick me.

Physical comedy—the success of the later '70s, had its socially powerful moments, although it more often expressed frustration than any possibility of exit from the reigning madness. *Blazing Saddles* (1974) dared to laugh at racism as well as at he-man heroic Westerns. *Car Wash* (1977) was proof that work drives you nuts. And *Animal House* (1978) ran its physical humor on the fuel of social discontent, although it harked back to the '50s and repeated that era's choices between cold professionalism and dead-ending excess.

Comedy with manners.

Only one person has both the wit and the anxiety to carry off drawing room sex-role comedy these days—Woody Allen. *Annie Hall* (1977), with a touch of *Manhattan*, is a peak in that kind of film. We are lucky that Allen cares so much about loving and about listening, and feels so inadequate that he makes movie after movie about it.

Modern mores.

Films that give us a window on domestic life suggested how increasingly preoccupied we are with the notion of lifestyle—a concept that implies a choice most of us don't have, but think we do and often experience primarily in TV and movies.

Domestic dramas that began the decade reflected the catchy concerns of '60s movies—the romance of ambisexuality and of marginality, for instance. *Sunday Bloody Sunday* (technically foreign, since director John Schlesinger and scriptwriter Penelope Gilliatt are English), made in 1972, is a talky but fascinating modern triangle in which commitment is the one thing you can't ask for. *Trash* (1970) is a portrait of the newfangled all-American boy (Joe Dellandro), looking for love and unable to see it all around him in a smorgasbord of forms.

The mid- and later '70s produced a spate of trials-of-middle-class-urban-life films. Some were excellent close-focus looks at relationships. Paul Mazursky's '70s films all produced rich character portraits. One of his best is *Next Stop, Greenwich Village* (1976), a visit with a group of bohemian Village friends in the '50s—everyone tries so hard to be daring and crazy but not have anyone get hurt. Recently Robert Benton's Christmas release, *Kramer vs. Kramer*, also a middle-class cultural essay, warmly shows fathers and children together and finally gives a good role to Dustin Hoffman.

Earlier, Robert Altman's *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* (1971), *Thieves like Us* and *California Split* (both 1974) had given us less loving, more biting American portraits. Each film showed us the hollowness of an American get-rich-and-happy-quick myth (frontier free enterprise, bank robbery and gambling, respectively). From *Nashville* on, Altman's critique of American culture became alternately more facile and more obscure, though the viciously quick character sketches persist.

Working Class Heroes (No Heroines).

As the Me Decade wound on, it became less touchy and more acceptable to portray working class with some of the same positive sentiment that middle class daily life got. Some of the sentiment was even honest. *Rocky*'s (1976) success in delivering a lovable working class hero was unique—not even the ever-more-sentimental Sylvester Stallone could repeat it. But other working class stories were successful. *Breaking Away* (1979), a lighthearted movie, was strongest when it stuck to the responses of four high school buddies to growing up disparaged. *Bingo Long and the Travelling All Stars and Motor Kings* (1976) was an energetic and sensitive story of an all-black barnstorming baseball team in 1979. And Gary Busey in *The Buddy Holly Story* (1978) was terrific as the wired young rocker who, no kidding, liked working with blacks and living with women.

Hardware, software.

New Hollywood directors played liberally with new technological possibilities in filmmaking. One of the most interesting of them was the rise of the soundtrack as a primary element in filmmaking. *The Conversation* (1974) used the soundtrack as a defining part of the story. It suffered, perhaps, for communicating

Continued on page 14.

INDEPENDENT FILM



Bob Fitch

A zipcode sorter for the postal service. Insert: filmmakers Andrea Hricko, Cathy Zheutlin, Este Gardner and Ken Light.

Women — work may be hazardous to our health

By Mike Berkowitz

Forty-three million women work in the United States. They drive buses, wait on tables, pack meat, teach school and mine coal. Their jobs often confront them with a bewildering array of hazards to their health. But you would hardly know it from the way these jobs are portrayed in the popular culture. In fact, it is only very recently that any images of women working have surfaced.

So neither Andrea Hricko nor Ken Light were surprised when they encountered difficulty in raising funds for *Working for Your Life*, their recently released film on health and safety hazards to working women. Before backers would even consider the controversies surrounding workplace dangers, they were

Organizing improves safety, but only one in seven women workers is a union member.

frightened away by the film's focus on women.

One potential backer refused to lend support because he did not believe that many women work. A local television station declined to support claiming "no one would be interested in women working—you'd have to show it on afternoon television."

Fortunately others knew better. Fourteen international unions, 25 locals and a variety of foundations ranging from Ford to the Woody Guthrie Foundation provided the \$60,000 support that

was necessary to complete the film. The union backing—including United Steel Workers, AFSCME, International Association of Machinists, OCAW, SEIU, Longshoremen and IBEW—was an important step.

In the past, individual unions have concentrated on films focused exclusively on their own industries. Often the unions have hired large companies specializing in making such films. But Hricko and Light worked through the auspices of the University of California's Labor Occupational Health Program, where they are employed. Their finished product cuts across virtually all categories of women's work.

In describing the dangers of work, Hricko and Light let the facts and the workers speak for themselves. Listen to Trudy Southern, who retired after 29 years at a Southern California

electric iron manufacturing plant: "There were fumes, smoke and asbestos in the air all the time. It was common to be half ill. Dust was in the air all the time. We'd call one of the machines 'old smokey.' That dust was so thick you had to blow it off your coffee cup...I worked in the cord department 19 years before I knew the [electric iron] cords were made of asbestos. I can't help but wonder how many people have died because of it. And you know, the company has never recognized the problem or even been sympathetic. All they want to do is make a profit. That's all they care about."

Unlike the workers exposed to asbestos, Paula Goodman did not have to wait years for the danger at her workplace to show up. Goodman caught her hand in a machine at the plant where she worked. The noise level in the factory was so loud that she couldn't get a foreman's attention. When fellow workers discovered what had happened, they had to dismantle the entire machine, taking almost an hour to free her. "I was 'degloved,'" says Goodman, using the official jargon to say that the machine picked all the skin off and mangled her hand. "It's so hard to do things around the kitchen now," says Goodman, half-joking, "...and you know that commercial where the woman complains about breaking her fingernail..." Goodman's voice trails off.

The feel of the job.

The film begins with women leaving for their jobs before dawn and concludes with them punching out of work at day's end. In between we see women working in restaurants, packing plants, munitions factories, textile mills, farms, utility companies, steel mills and machine shops.

Hricko and Light give us the feel of what these jobs are like. Cameras follow workers on their tasks, as a crisp narrative, written by Hricko and Janet Bertinuso, gives thumbnail descriptions of each occupation and discusses the dangers involved.

We see the stress and fatigue on jobs often considered technically 'safe.' Telephone operators are timed when in the bathroom. A secretary describes her sterile, windowless office as a 'mini-jail.'

Other threats to health are more immediate. A lab technician matter of factly relates that she does not know what chemicals she handles and breathes all day. A group of plant workers cheerfully explain that the occasion of the filming is the first

time they'll be using their hard hats.

Some women refused to cooperate with the filmmakers, believing that the way to deal with dangerous or unhealthy conditions was for workers to exercise greater care. But the film showed more and more women dealing with unsafe working conditions as a threat they no longer had to tolerate.

The shift in responsibility away from the victims is a major victory for health educators, investigative reporters and workers. The next step, intervention to regulate health and safety conditions, is falling victim to the well-orchestrated New Right campaign against all government regulation. Unfortunately, it is also suffering from problems of its own generation.

Limits to help.

Government agencies such as the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and OSHA have had mixed success in fighting for workers' lives. Although the filmmakers urge workers to contact these agencies for help, a central incident in the film illustrates their limitations. When a West Virginia shoe factory was forced to close down because two dozen women had been overcome by dizziness and fainted, NIOSH attempted to explain the incident as a case of mass hysteria and OSHA refused to close the plant down. Later investigation found that a venting problem had actually changed the condition of the air in the factory.

The film makes it clear that the best way to secure health and safety rights is through organizing. Currently only one in seven working women belongs to a labor organization. "But if you're not in a union," explains Hricko and Light, "it's going to be very hard for you to do anything about safety." Toward this end, the film shows women organizers acting to develop safety standards. Lulu Simmons, a black machinist, organizes a Committee on Occupational Safety and Health within her local. Chief Union Steward Barbara Plotkin campaigns to change the use of video terminals in offices. And clerical support groups that have sprung up in at least twenty large American cities push to remove hidden hazards from offices.

Mike Berkowitz is a city planner in Berkeley. *Working for Your Life* is available from LOHP Films, Transit Media, 779 Susquehanna Ave., Franklin Lakes NJ, 07417.

Guindon



"I wonder what Sergio Mendes is going to call his group this year?"

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Movies

Continued from page 13.
too well a deep unease, a generalized paranoia.

Days of Heaven (1978) also dramatically used the soundtrack, and the natural-light cinematography also contributed to produce a hypnotically-beautiful film. It however evoked only paralyzing despair, becoming a painterly treatment of distress.

The Big Picture.

The Godfather I (1972) and II (1974) formed an incomparable American epic. Demonstrating Francis Coppola's talents when he is reined in, the epic is high adventure—but also a domestic

drama. It's a story of big business, but also one of generational interplay. It's an ethnic drama but also an all-American story. This film is already an American classic. It's what we have instead of a Great American Novel.

The '70s were also rich in increasingly sophisticated independent films, the best of which were documentaries. Documentary features in the '70s connected the dramatic structure of movies with the structure of social conflict. Barbara Kopple's *Harlan County USA* (1976), Glenn Silber and Barry Brown's *The War at Home* (1979) and Ira Wohl's *Best Boy* (1979) all took several years of history (a union struggle, the antiwar era, and a family crisis respectively) and presented it to us as two-hour drama.

Foreign films? I would top a '70s favorite list with *The Battle of Chile* (1973-1979, Chile-Cuba); Bunuel's *Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* (1972, France); Sergio Giral's *The Other Francisco* (1974) and Tomas Gutierrez Alea's *The Last Supper* (1976-both Cuba); Marcel Ophüls' *The Sorrow and the Pity* (1971, France); Mireille Dansereau's *Dreamlife* (1973, Canada); Perry Henzell's *The Harder They Come* (1973, Jamaica); Jean-Jacques Annaud's *Black and White in Color* (1977, France-Ivory Coast).

If I were meanminded enough to make a worst-of list, it would include, for their empty pretension, *Blue Collar*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Last Tango in Paris* and *Cries and Whispers*; and for a pornographic violence, *Taxi Driver*, *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Exorcist*.

Clancy Sigal

Continued from page 16.

I do think I am joined indissolubly with people like Ehrlichman and Halde- man because on the UCLA campus we had certain things in common that neither they nor I had in common with anyone else in the student body.

I was a political organizer, so were they. People who run easily in the corridors of power have much more in common with each other than with the large number of people who don't care about power.

Is there a chance of the left achieving political power in the U.S., in your opinion?

Clearly in the immediate future nothing recognizably left is going to take power. Anybody who thinks that is suffering from a great illusion. And anybody who believes, for example, that Teddy Kennedy is left is in absolute dreamland. I thought that was one of the fundamental lessons of Franklin Roosevelt in the '30s. No one man is going to save us.

Power comes in different packages, some small and some large. It seems to me that the left has taken power in the U.S. in the sense of creating, at least partially, its own culture. But the problem with creating in the U.S. an exclusive left culture is that of developing a socialism for ourselves that has little to do with the lives of the majority of people.

In the U.S. today a whole generation of affluent lefts has grown up. My generation was basically quite poor. We shared the lifestyle of the large majority



Grace Moeckel

of American people. I don't think that's true any more. Most leftists I know—this is a tentative assessment—live lives that are qualitatively different from those of the people to whom they wish to bring socialism.

When I go into the homes of workers in the U.S., people I know, they live a million miles away from the homes of the middle-class left-wing intellectuals. It would be silly for the leftists to impoverish themselves—it leads to a fanaticism that can be very unpleasant. And there is a certain working class tradition that may not want to live the way a middle class leftie does.

But a priority is the development of a left in which many different lifestyles can exist. The problem is to develop lines of communication.

Al Auster is a New York historian and critic who frequently writes on television for In These Times. Len Quart is professor of English at Staten Island College, N.Y.

KRASSNER PREDICTS

By Paul Krassner

Abbie Hoffman will turn out to be one of the American hostages. Hamilton Jordan will personally plead for his release.

The Pope will reaffirm his infallibility. This pronouncement will be followed by an ongoing *cinema verite* TV production of *Inquisition II*.

Christine Jorgensen—who was the first individual ever to undergo gender-changing surgery—will be the first transsexual to be admitted to a convent.

Baloney sandwiches on white bread with mustard will make a big comeback in jaded Hollywood circles.

Werner Erhard will solve the world hunger crisis with a distribution system for chocolate-covered cockroaches.

Evelyn Wood will initiate a speed-lip-reading program for the hard-of-hearing. They will then save time by watching their video cassettes at fast forward speed.

Meryl Streep will be interviewed by Barbara Walters, after which she will have her name legally changed to Mewyr Stweep.

The Susan B. Anthony coin will no longer be confused with a quarter as soon as the dollar itself becomes worth 25 cents.

Sammy Davis, Sandy Duncan, Peter Falk and Wolfman Jack will all use their glass eyes in a celebrity marbles tournament for charity.

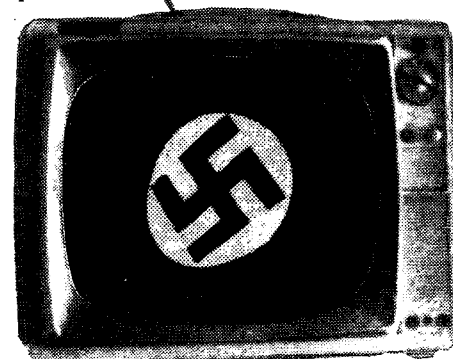
A national organization of bi-sexual activists will declare Odd-Even days for their membership.

A neutron bomb will accidentally explode in Iran.

Jimmy Carter will make a startling confession in a *Playboy* interview, only to be accused by his political opponents of trying to get the incest vote.

There will be a new candy sensation which not only doesn't melt in your mouth, but also breaks your teeth; it will be called S & Ms.

The Shah will leave Panama, he will go to Egypt, the PLO will combine with Israeli Intelligence, the Pyramids will be blown up, World War III will start in the mideast and nearly all life on the planet will be destroyed, but a cure will be discovered for holiday depression.



Investigative reporters will discover that the so-called Neilsen TV rating families are actually elderly Nazi technicians of behavior modification imported to the U.S. in 1945 as our spoils for winning World War II.

Pope John Paul II, in order to get the Roman Catholic Church back in the black financially, will personally auction off the complete contents of the Vatican's famed pornography library.

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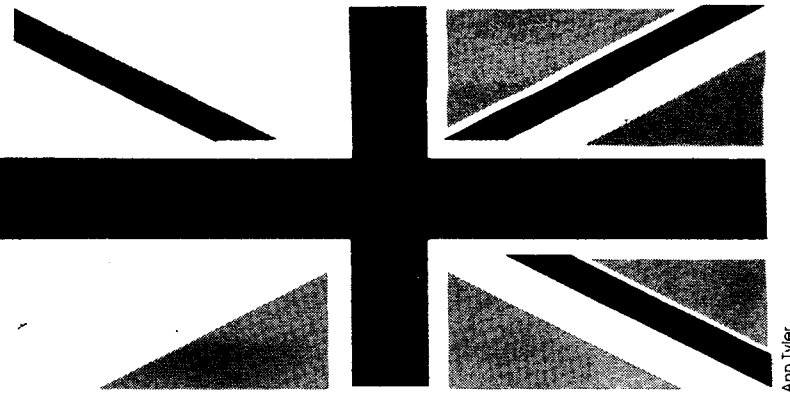
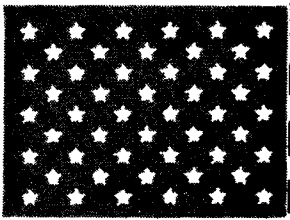
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ZONE OF THE EXTERIOR

Expatriate writer
Clancy Sigal
talks about the
left and left
culture in the
U.S. and Britain.

By Albert Auster
and Leonard Quart

Clancy Sigal, an American novelist and journalist who lives in London, is one of the foremost literary figures of the American left. Born in Tennessee, Sigal first worked for the UAW and after graduating from UCLA in 1950 became a literary agent and story reader in Hollywood.

Sigal's first book, *Weekend in Dinlock* (1960), was a sensitive journalistic account of Yorkshire coalminers, in the tradition of George Orwell's classic *The Road to Wigan Pier*. However, it was Sigal's second book, *Going Away* (1961), that established him as especially significant for the American left. Winner of the Houghton-Mifflin fellowship and critically acclaimed, *Going Away* is a semi-autobiographical novel that takes place during the Hungarian uprising in 1956 and describes a young man's passionate California-to-east coast journey in search of his roots and the roots of the American left.

In 1957, prior to the publication of either book, Sigal moved to London. In the following years he wrote for numerous British periodicals (*The New Statesman*, *New Society*, *The Guardian*), broadcast over BBC and participated in the rise of the British new left. In 1976 Sigal published *Zone of the Interior*, a fictionalized account of his experiences with the British anti-psychiatry movement founded by R.D. Laing and others. *Zone of the Interior* is a perceptive satire on the movement, containing some controversial portraits of leading British intellectuals and writers. It is also the story of a man coming to grips with emotional pain and his own identity.

This year Clancy Sigal is teaching film and literature at the University of California, Santa Barbara. This interview was conducted at BBC headquarters, Broadcasting House, London, and originally aired over WBAI-FM (Pacifica) in New York.

Have your returns to America changed your attitudes about both societies?

Yes, in different ways. Going back to America is an immense pleasure to me, and I go back now as frequently as I possibly can. I make almost annual commutes now.

One of the shameful things I find is that I'm homesick. Also, a lot of the things that drove me out of the States in the '50s are things that I have come to even admire living in England. It may be the difference between living in a declining, ineffective capitalist society and living in a society that's still full of a lot of pizzazz, whatever cruelties go with it.

I haven't become so depraved that I like Howard Johnson's. But I have to confess that when McDonald's comes to England it definitely raises the level of cuisine.

What political changes have you noticed?

When I left the U.S. it was a bad time for the left in general and for my friends in particular. The FBI had done their work on us, and we had all gone to ground. My political position then was roughly left socialist. I remember that we used to meet, seven of us, in my garage apartment in Los Angeles, basically to hold each other's hand.

Coming back to the U.S. now is like my dreams come true—it almost seems as if everybody's left. It must seem an absolutely daft statement to anyone who lives in the States, but I'm coming back reaping the benefit of the struggle in the '60s and '70s, and now it seems to me the left is much more accepted and acceptable than ever before.

There are now left institutions in the U.S., which we didn't have then. There's the Pacifica set-up, *In These Times*, *Marxist Perspectives*. Friends of mine who were living underground in the '50s are now in positions of considerable responsibility, particularly in the academy. There's a Marxist wing—I'm asked to speak at my own university, which more or less threw me out in 1950.

But many people of my own generation—I'm in my early 50s—have depoliticized. Most of the people I know—those who didn't kill themselves, go under or disappear—are making quite a lot of money. They're dug in financially and in other ways into American society. Most of them are family people, and I have no children.

I'm filled with admiration and a sense of awe for what people of a younger generation have done. To a large extent the freer and easier atmosphere on the left has been created by them.

The counterculture opened us all up to irrational currents, to undogmatic currents, to certain kinds of music, to a brand of humor that makes it difficult to be the lumbering, factional Marxist that made the left so boring in the '40s and '50s.

Being that kind of Marxist had its advantages. We were terrific organizers, you know. But it wasn't a very nice way to live. If we can somehow find a marvelous way to live and be terrific organizers—that's nirvana.

What are your impressions of the British left?

The left in this country is indelibly part of what is happening in the country as a whole. It shares a certain kind of intellectual paralysis and political bankruptcy. We on the left haven't had a new idea probably since the Labour Party election victory in 1945. We stumble from issue to issue, chronically predicting the collapse of capitalism, which hasn't quite happened.

There are individuals who are writing and speaking with a degree of relevance—Tom Nairn, who has written brilliantly about the "national issue"—Scotland, Wales, Ireland; and some of Edward Thompson's work. Once I've said that—I except the feminist writers—I can't think of much that's being done here intellectually.

The feminist movement is different and much healthier than the British left in general. Feminism reflects something so real, a movement of women, demands by women at a gut issue level. Women have begun to organize intellectually for themselves. And to an extent they have managed to break away from the old lumbering macho male left thing.

The left by and large has not managed to do that. Both the Labour and the sectarian left are still male dominated. Also, the feminist left is more prepared to grapple with issues outside the sacred canons of Lenin and Marx.

Do you plan to move back to the U.S.?

Well, living in England has become a pleasant habit, and I'm extremely reluctant to go cold turkey on it. I enjoy the English people, if not the political system. Besides, I don't think in terms of permanent categories. I've been "living on air" for some time, and I've been commuting for years between the two countries. It's good for me to keep going back and forth.

Furthermore, it's good for the left that some of us do. It's up to some of us to keep the links to other countries open. The American left can be very insulated and provincial.

At the end of your last novel *Sid Bell*, the hero, who has been heavily involved in anti-psychiatry, returns to a political vision of the world. Will your next novel take him beyond that point?

At the end of the book *Sid Bell*—who plunged into the anti-psychiatric scene and became a "schizophrenic for purely political reasons," an experience that depoliticized him—has a desperate yearning to return to ordinary, rational, logical life. Part of that for him in the novel is that he has to begin relearning political lessons he had forgotten in the schizophrenic counterculture.

He has to start with the basics of organizing. He learns once again to meet with people in boring committee meetings.

I'm working on a novel now about the U.S., but I don't know how it's going to come out. *Going Away* was written from a young man's point of view. I'm now middle-aged, and I'm curious about

bel law. I am reduced to slipping my own novel under the table at dinner parties.

There has been much controversy recently in the U.S. about the Rosenberg and Hiss cases.

I read that book by that unpleasant man Allen Weinstein [*Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case*], who was doing some very unscholarly things, but he and others raised questions about Hiss' credibility that I had doubts about then and still do today.

My attitude on the Rosenbergs is conditioned by the kinds of people who were running the Save the Rosenbergs Committees in the '50s. Eventually I and a few friends had to go and form our own committees, simply because the Communist Party view said, "There are no Soviet spies in America, and certainly the Rosenbergs aren't among them."

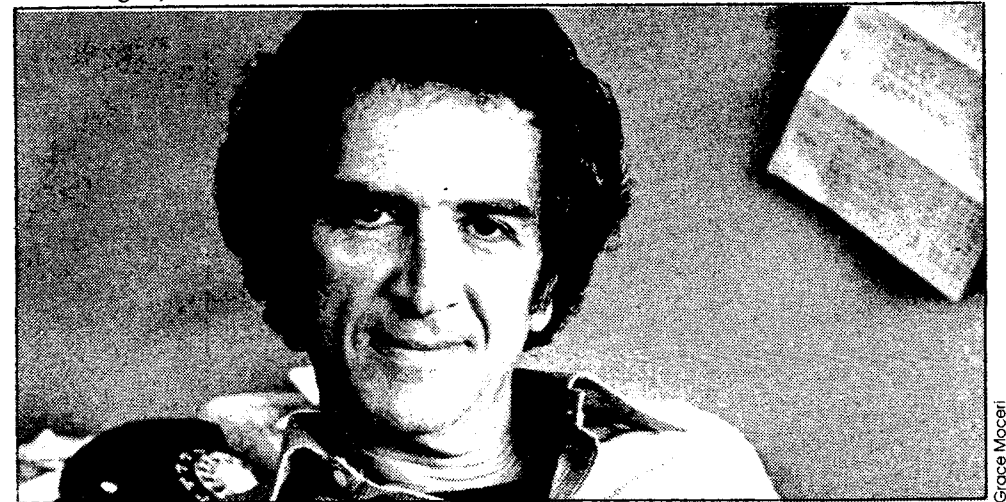
I thought there certainly were a lot of Soviet spies in America—and so what? There was a possibility that the government had the goods on the Rosenbergs, but it seemed to me that the case was not proven and that the Rosenbergs were being railroaded in a hysterical atmosphere.

The Radosh-Stern argument that Julius was a spy and Ethel wasn't seems plausible to me. But if I found out they had both been guilty it wouldn't disillusion me.

In *The Ends of Power*, H.R. Haldeman says that you will vouch for his non-anti-communist credentials. You visited him when you were last in Los Angeles, didn't you?

Yes, we spent the day together, and then I went up to the pokey with him and spent another day there.

I think Bob Haldeman played fast and loose with the truth—not for the first time in his life—when he wrote that. He



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what middle age does to an old line leftie like me.

Very few American writers work in a political context. Sol Yurick claims he feels uneasy being a committed political writer when most are not. Britain seems to have a deeper tradition of social novels than the U.S.

I'm caught between two traditions—the British social novel like Margaret Drabble's, and Sol's. His attempts as a Marxist to come to grips with traditional fiction are wholly admirable, I think. I'm an American writer living in England. I can't shake off my American brashness, at the same time I can't help but be influenced by the social insights someone like Drabble has.

If I continue to write in my chosen idiom I will never be able to write a novel about England. *Zone of the Interior* is banned here, because of a Draconian li-

is probably pound-for-pound the most ideological right winger I ever met in my life. Unfortunately at a personal level I happen to like him. We went to school together, we get along. I also went to school with John Ehrlichman and we spent time together talking, too.

I know these gentlemen when they are—thank heaven—without power. It must have been terrifying when they had power. The interesting thing is how two boys from squarely within an American tradition could become almost neo-fascist. They don't understand it, and they would reject that label immediately, but it's one of the intriguing things I'm trying to deal with in my novel. People like Haldeman and Ehrlichman can't think their way through these things, except to survive, and so we on the left have to do the thinking about it.

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